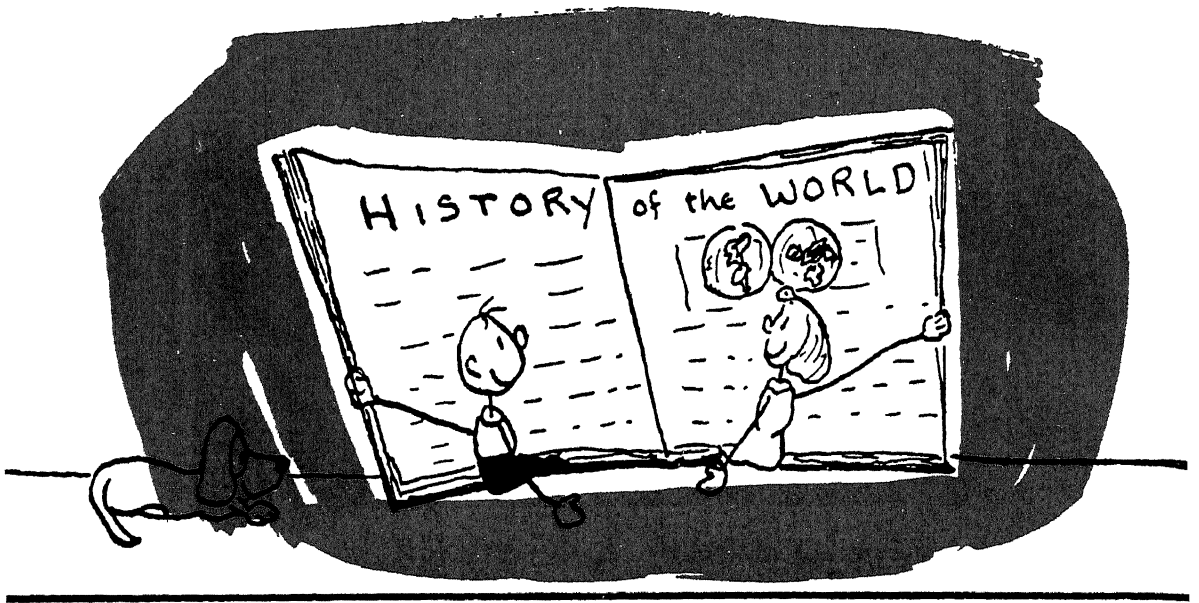


HISTORY CAN BE FUN

By
Munro Leaf



WARD, LOCK & CO., LIMITED
LONDON MELBOURNE AND JOHANNESBURG



The story of **HISTORY** is really the story of **YOU**

That may seem kind of silly at first, but if you stop to think about it you will see why it is true. Who you are, where you live and how and why you do what you do every day, is like the latest chapter of a story that was started thousands of years ago and is still going on.

You once had a . . .

great - great - great - great - great - great - great - great
great - great - great - great - great - great - great - great
great - great - great - great - great - great - great - great

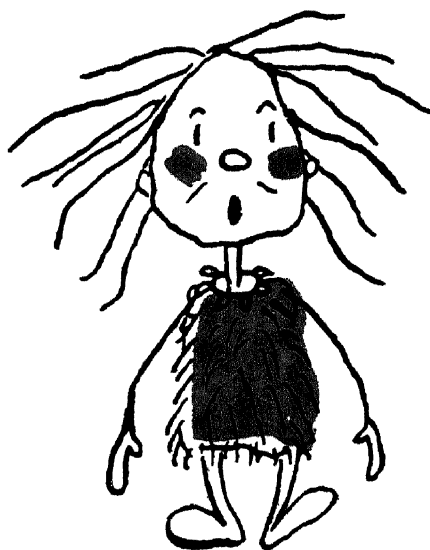
GRANDFATHER and GRANDMOTHER

who didn't know how to read, write, count, plant a garden, raise animals, or make and use tools or weapons.

They probably didn't even know how to talk except to make grunts and howl at each other and they spent most of their time hunting for things to eat and running and hiding from animals that wanted to eat them.

You can be sure that they didn't have much fun.

How they lived and how their children lived and their children's children for years and years and years, we can only learn about when we find their caves and mounds where bones and stones and crude hammers and hatchets and spears are buried. They sometimes drew pictures that help us to guess, but until men and women learned to write and leave words that tell us about themselves, we don't have any really true History.



So History, which is the written record of what people did in the past that has made you the way you are today, starts nearly six thousand years ago in a place called Egypt that is many hundreds of miles from where you are now.

Before we go to Egypt where the first written history was found, let us remember one important thing about people everywhere at any time, today or six thousand years ago — and that is this —

We have all wanted the same things:

Food

Clothing

Shelter, which means a place to live

If we could get those, then we have wanted a chance to make things and do things that would help to make life pleasanter for ourselves and for our children.

This is true of people all over the world and always has been.



MAN IS THE ONLY CREATURE WHO USES TOOLS!



The first place in the world where people were comfortable enough with their food, clothing and shelter so they could start to think about doing some pleasant things together and to leave us their written story was in Egypt.

Egypt is in North Africa where the climate is fairly warm all year, and there was stone there and wood and clay for making buildings to live in, so neither **CLOTHING** nor **SHELTER** was too much of a problem.

People found that plenty of **FOOD** could be raised if they worked together and helped each other and this is how they did it:

Every year at about the same time, the water of the Nile River rises about thirty or forty feet and flows over its banks, flooding the valley on either side of it for a stretch of nearly six hundred miles down to the Mediterranean Sea. When the water of the river goes down again (as it always does) it leaves a layer of good, rich mud that makes wonderful soil in which to raise crops. So instead of always hunting and hiding, people long

ago started to plant seeds in this mud and to live on the grain they raised and to keep and feed some animals like cows, sheep and goats.

If they helped each other they could chase off wild, hunting animals and all be safer than they had ever been before.

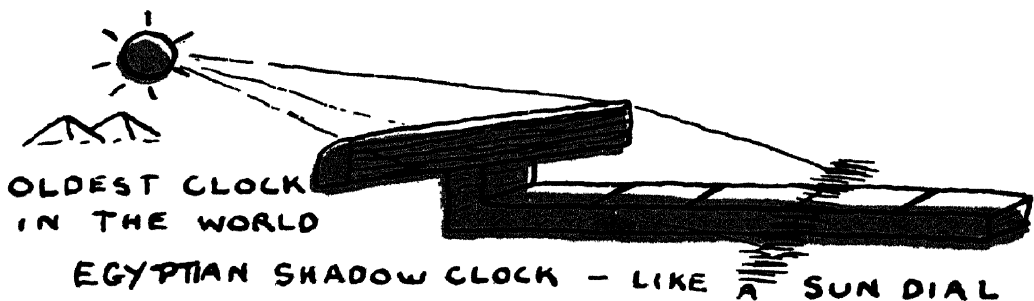
They learned to dig ditches and build dams and dikes together so they could use the water of the Nile to keep their crops growing. We call this irrigation and we still do it in many parts of the world today.

Working together, they learned how to talk to each other and after many years some of them learned to make a picture writing that told the story of how they lived.

We have learned about the early Egyptians from this writing that they left carved in stone, painted on walls and written with a brush or pen and ink on sheets of papyrus.

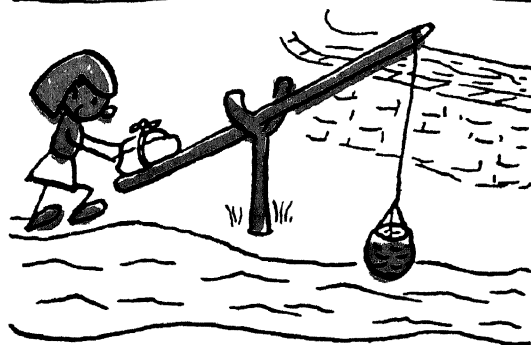
Papyrus is a reed that grows in Egypt and they rolled out thin strips of it and stuck them together in sheets that they could roll up like wallpaper. We get our word

PAPER from PAPYRUS.

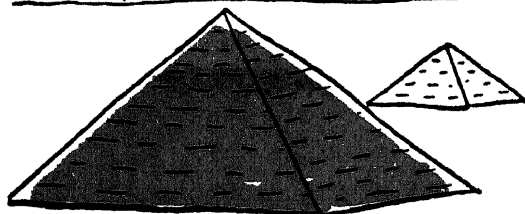




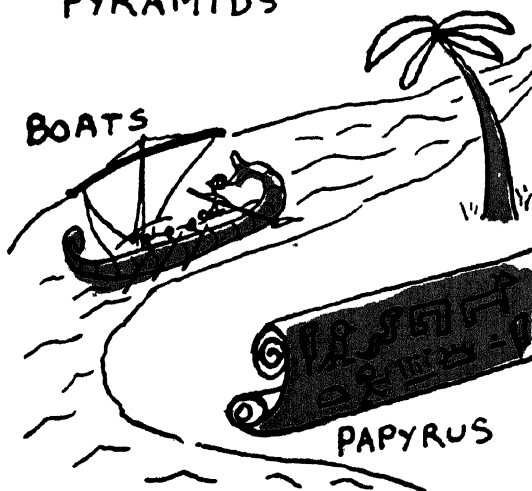
MEN BEGAN TO USE
ANIMALS TO HELP
THEM RAISE
CROPS THEY BOTH ATE.



THEY BEGAN TO MAKE
CRUDE MACHINES
TO MAKE WORK
EASIER



PYRAMIDS



BOATS

PAPYRUS

The Egyptians learned many useful things and passed their knowledge along to others.

They learned to make tools and weapons of metal.

They built boats and large buildings.

They learned a lot about planting different kinds of crops and storing them.

They wove cloth, painted pictures and made beautiful statues, furniture and jewelry.

They watched the regular rising and flooding of the Nile River and studied how the earth and the moon and the sun moved at certain times and after years of thinking about it they made a calendar with 365 days in it — very much like the one we use today.

After a while, so many people grew there or came to live in the Nile River valley that they started villages which became cities and they had leaders who made rules and laws that we now call government.

The early leaders were priests, who were like doctors and judges and record keepers, besides being

the clergymen in the temples of the Egyptian gods.

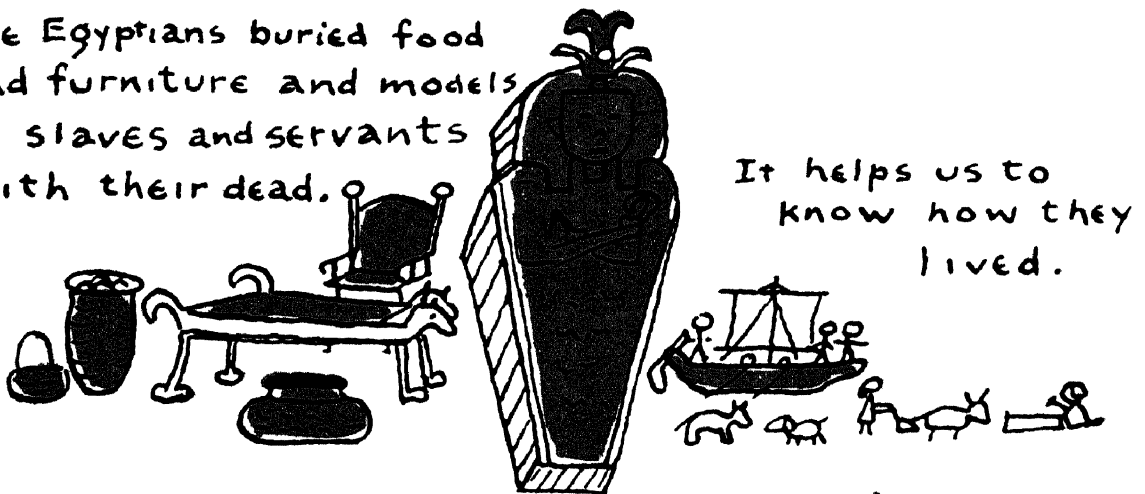
Then strong warriors became kings and ruled the people too. After a while the strongest king ruled all the rest and he was called the Pharaoh or Emperor.

The early Egyptians believed that people would want their bodies after they were dead, so they used to wrap them up in a special way that made them mummies. When they buried them they would pile stones up around them to protect these mummies.

Many of the Pharaohs, while they were alive, made thousands and thousands of their people work for years and years to build bigger and bigger rock piles to protect their royal bodies when they died. Those giant stone piles are called Pyramids and they are still standing in Egypt today. One of them is about five hundred feet high and covers more than thirteen acres of land.

After the Pharaohs weakened their country by such rock piling foolishness instead of helping their people do useful things, Egypt was conquered by armies from other lands and it stopped being a great and powerful country.

The Egyptians buried food and furniture and models of slaves and servants with their dead.



It helps us to know how they lived.



WHERE CIVILIZATION STARTED

If you will look at the map, you will see that in Asia not so many hundreds of miles from Egypt there is another land that has fertile, crop-raising valleys that are watered by two more big rivers.

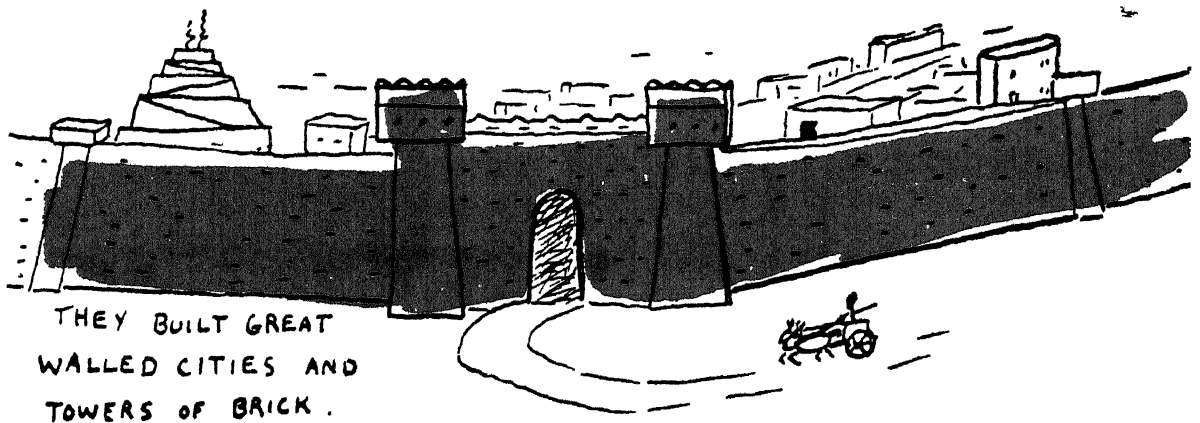
That land is called Mesopotamia (because that means "between the rivers") and the two rivers are called the Tigris and the Euphrates. They both flow down into the Persian Gulf, and in the land around these two rivers people started to gather together and become civilized at about the same time as others did in Egypt.

Like the Egyptians, these people learned to irrigate the land, raise crops, keep flocks and herds of animals and to make buildings and boats and cities.

But unlike the Egyptians, their country wasn't so well protected by deserts and seas from other tribes and gangs of men who wanted the good things they had raised and made. That caused a lot of trouble for thousands of years, because it seems they were nearly always fighting wars to see who was going to be the ruler of this rich land.

But even with all their wars, the people in and around this land, the Sumerians, Babylonians, Assyrians, the Hittites, the Chaldeans and Semitic Arabs, Syrians, Hebrews and Phoenicians, the Lydians and the Medes and the Persians—they all thought up so many new and better ways to do different things that you and I are able to live much better now because of them.

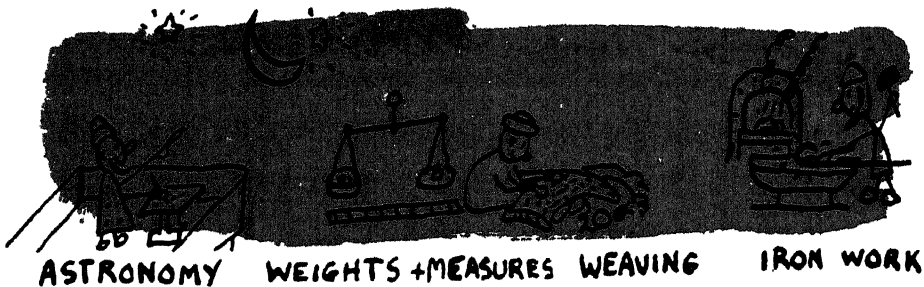
They came into this land from the desert lands, the



seashores, the mountains and the grassy pasturelands around it, so they brought different and new ideas for each other to think about and to improve.

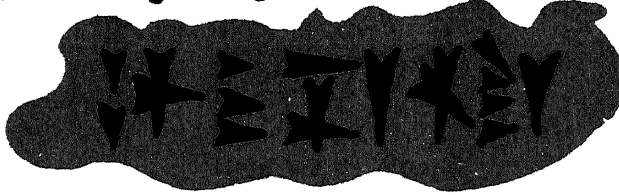
You may not remember all those strange names of the different peoples who lived there, names you often read in Bible stories, but you can remember some of the things they did for us.

When they weren't fighting, they started trading with each other. They would swap things like so many sheep or cows for some wood or stone to build with, or cloth to wear or food to eat. They tamed wild horses



and taught them to pull the carts and chariots that they had invented after somebody discovered that a wheel would roll. They made roads and bridges and had messengers that really were the start of our system of mailing letters today.

They wrote on clay tablets with pointed sticks that made little wedge-shaped marks like this.



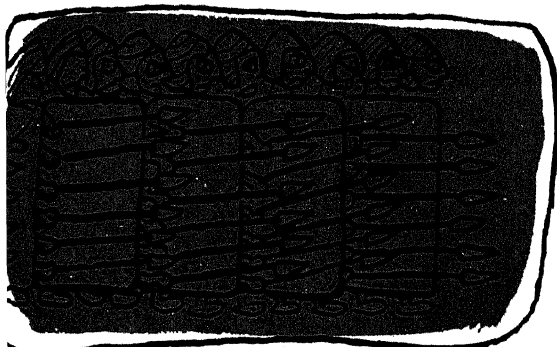
After a while the Phoenicians who lived by the sea and were great sailors and traders made up an alphabet that was the start of the one we use today.

Do you know what a wonderful invention our alphabet is? With only 26 little marks we can write all the words in our language.

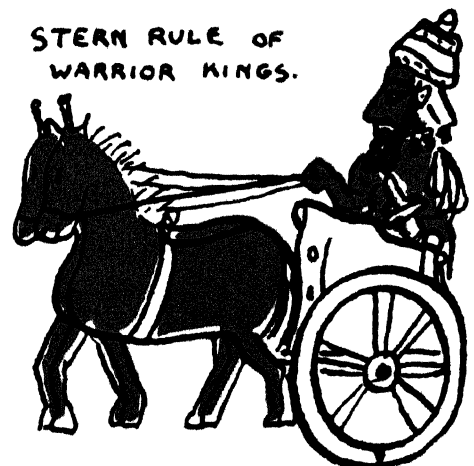
They learned about the movements of the sun and moon and stars so well that we still use their information today in our astronomy. Our week of seven days comes from them. Too bad they didn't make longer week-ends.

They discovered how to melt and use iron for many things that are so valuable and useful to us right now.

They measured things and measured time, and learned to weave cloth from wool and cotton and they dyed it with beautiful colours. After a while they even thought up the first **MONEY**, so that people didn't have to trade just things for things—like cows for grain. A person could then trade a cow for money and then buy anything else he wanted to with it.



OLD STONE PICTURE OF A VERY EARLY
MILITARY FORMATION

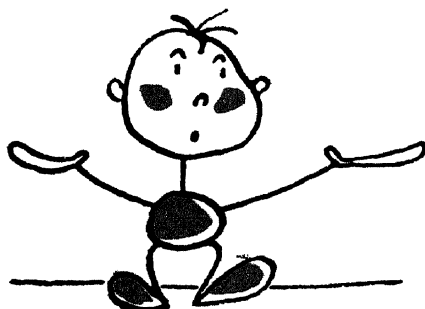
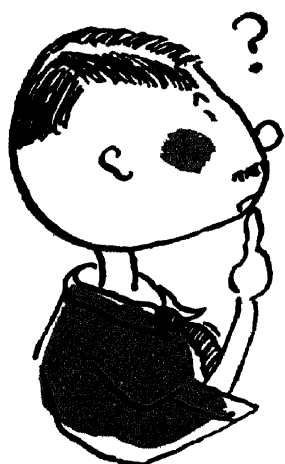


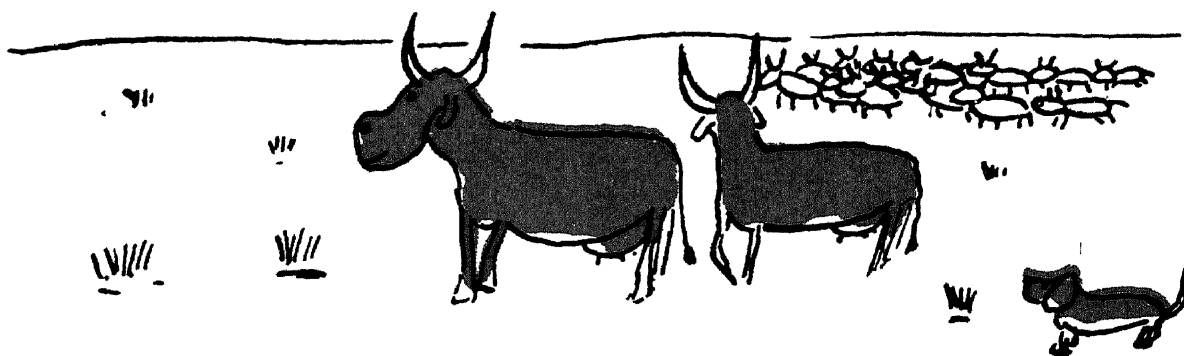
If you think your parents and teachers and policemen are strict today, you should have lived when you had to obey some of the kings and emperors who started laws in and around Mesopotamia thousands of years ago.

Right here you might very well say, "It's all very well to talk about Egypt and Mesopotamia and the things that were done there, but what does that have to do with me? I didn't come from either of those places—and my great-great many great grandfathers didn't either."

You may be right—perhaps they didn't—but you'll probably be surprised when you find out where they did come from.

If you ask your father or mother where their people came from, the chances are that they will say your family is a mixture of English, Scots, Welsh and Irish. Many families in the British Commonwealth like to call themselves a mixture, though some say they are 'pure Irish,' 'pure Australian' and so on. But long ago all our ancestors came over from Europe. (Ancestors is just a shorter way of saying all those greats in front of your grandfather's grandfathers or grandmothers.) But





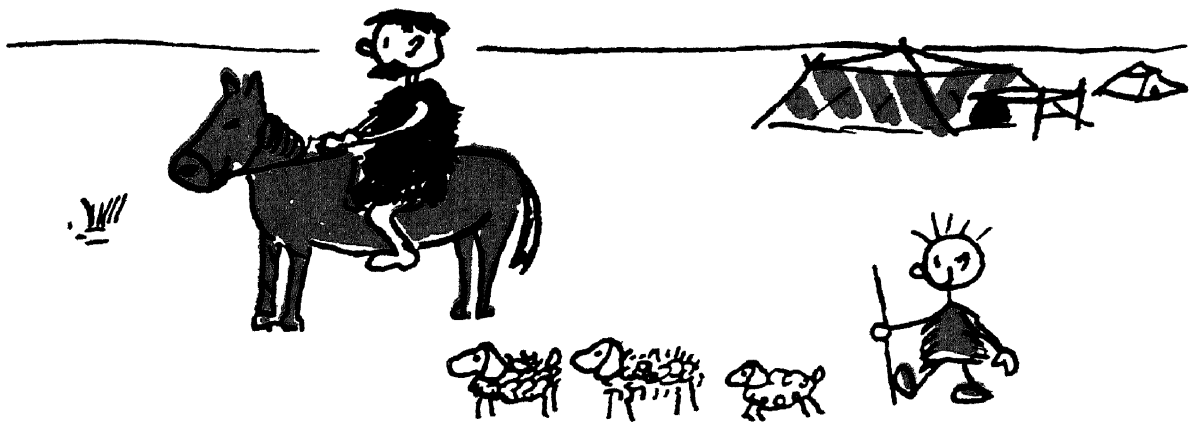
where did their ancestors come from before that? At one time, thousands of years ago, nearly all of Europe was covered with ice and snow and nobody could live there, so where were your long-ago ancestors then?

The scientists and people who work and study to find answers to such questions have nearly all decided that ancestors of most of the people who live in Europe came from a place far, far away to the east, in Asia, near the Caspian Sea. So some of your ancestor people had to come a long, long way before you could be born in Britain or Canada or wherever you live.

They didn't move in a hurry, and a lot happened to them on the way during all the years it took.

When these tribes and bands of white people who were our ancestors started to move away from their early homelands high up on the wide, grassy plains that we call steppes, they were herders of animals and wanderers that we call **NOMADS**.

Nomads move from place to place so the herds or flocks of animals they keep can find grass to eat. Usually, they live in tents that they can take with them, and long ago these nomads of the steppes learned to



tame horses to help them in their work.

In Egypt and Mesopotamia we learned about the people who settled in one place so they could raise grain and other crops for food.

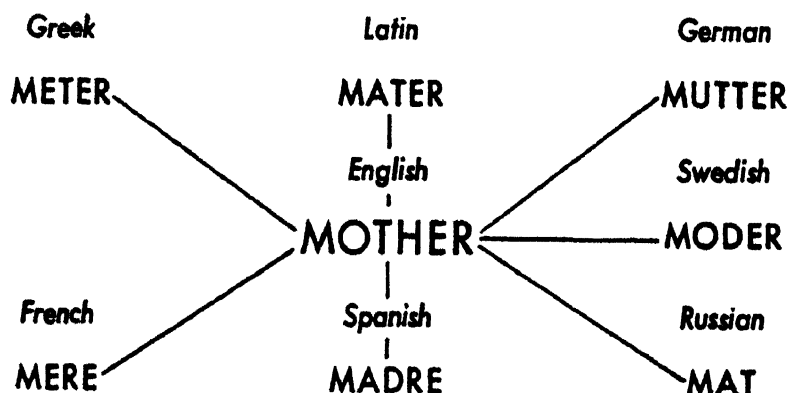
The main food of the nomads was the meat of their animals and milk, and the things that could be made from milk, like butter and cheese.

In one way you could say that nomads live on grass. If their animals get enough grass to eat, then the men have enough to eat, too.

When those early nomads left the country around the Caspian Sea to start their long wanderings, groups of them went in different directions. Some went eastward and southward, so we now find white people whose ancestors have lived in Persia, India and other distant parts of Asia for thousands of years.

The ones who went westward toward Europe spread out in all directions. Many of them stopped to mix with tribes of settled people and sometimes conquer and rule them. Others kept going until after a while they had scattered all over Europe and the islands in the Atlantic Ocean.

One of the reasons we think that most of the Europeans once all had some of the same kind of ancestors is because of their white colouring. Another reason is that many of the words we speak sound as though they probably came from one single language that they all spoke together long, long ago.

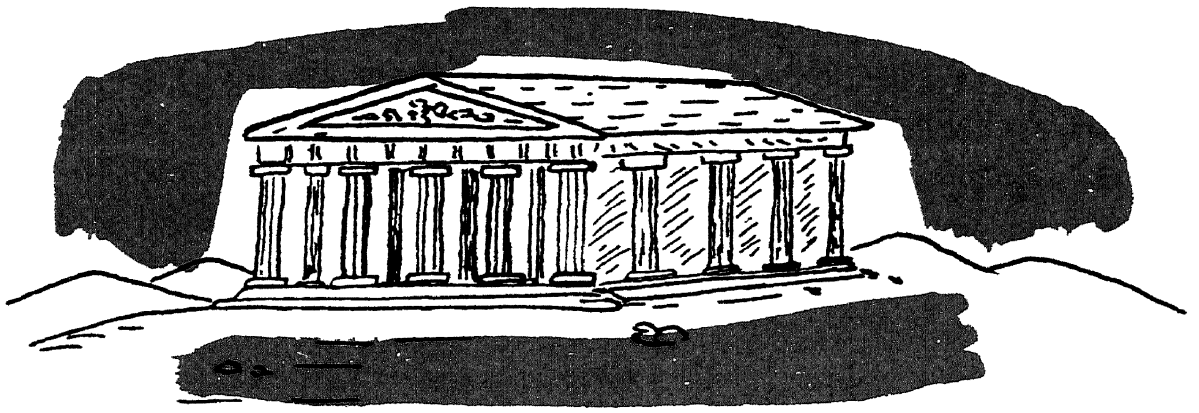


Because many of these early, early nomads went from the Caspian Sea to India and to Europe, they are often spoken of as the Indo-Europeans.

The next interesting people we will watch for a while in this book are some of these nomads who wandered down and settled in a land by the Mediterranean and Aegean Seas, and they are called the GREEKS.



ALL THE PEOPLE WHO MOVED
INTO EUROPE SEEMED TO
HAVE LOVED TO LISTEN TO
BARDS AND MINSTRELS WHO
SANG AND TOLD STORIES OF
THEIR HEROES



It's very hard sometimes to figure out just why some persons or some groups of people rise to greatness and have so much to do with the way many others live. Other people are willing to follow these leaders and their ways of doing things, mainly, I suppose, because it seems to make good sense. Whatever the reasons were, one of the greatest groups of people who have ever lived and taught the world many wonderful things and wise ways of thinking and acting were the people we call the ancient Greeks.

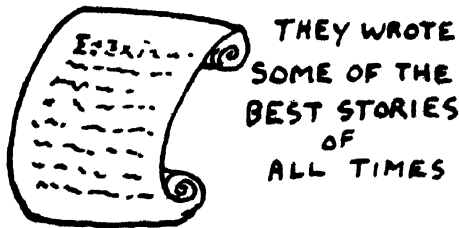
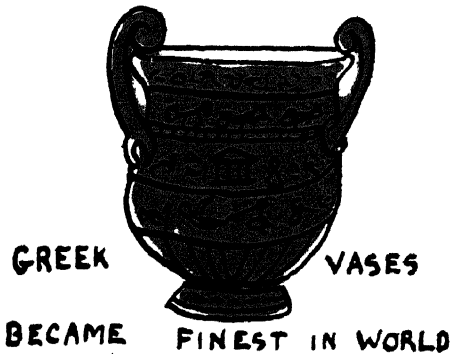
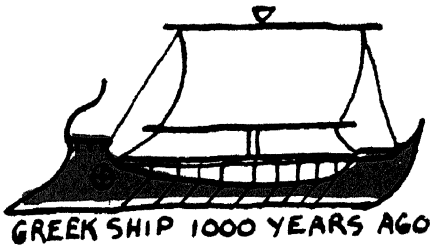
It wasn't because there were so many of them or because they were so powerful at first. To tell the truth, when they were doing their best thinking and giving the rest of the world their best teaching of ways to live and to make beautiful things, they were a pretty small group.

Those long-ago Greeks weren't perfect and they made some big and bad mistakes that finally made them a weak and broken little country that for hundreds of years was ruled by others. But while they were doing their best they left to you and me and the rest of the world some wonderful, valuable ideas.

When they first came wandering down from the northern lands around the Danube River into the hills and valleys and islands we now call Greece, they looked like a pretty crude, rough, tough and uncivilized crowd of nomads to the people who were already living there. But they were wise enough to learn and to welcome new ways and to try new things that looked sensible and useful to them. They certainly weren't lazy, and after a while they controlled the whole country and the islands of the Aegean Sea, which is a part of the Mediterranean.



At first they destroyed much that was good and beautiful that the people who lived in those islands had made in the hundreds of years that they had sailed and traded between the civilized lands of Egypt and the Mesopotamian Empires. However, the Greeks, who called themselves Hellenes, learned to value beauty and skill and right thinking so much, themselves, that later they more than made up for their early, ignorant destructiveness.



They became very good sailors and their ships sailed all over the Mediterranean carrying for trade the beautiful things their craftsmen had learned to make. Some of them sailed away to start new towns and cities and settle colonies in distant parts of that big inland sea. After a while we find Greek colonies way off in what are now France and Italy and even up on the shores of the Black Sea in Russia and in Asia Minor. They cared about simple and beautiful things, and their artists carved some of the greatest sculpture in the world, and their architects and builders made buildings and temples that were so lovely that we have been copying them ever since.

They added vowels to their written alphabet and made their language so rich in word pictures that their stories and poems and songs were models for hundreds of years and have been guides for the people who write for you even now. They started the whole idea of the theatre and used to go to see plays the way we go to big cricket or football games.

They believed that healthy and strong bodies help us to have wise and good minds, so they loved sports and games that helped build good bodies. The Olympic Games of today were started by them.

The greatest lesson they taught us, though, was to use our minds. To try to find out the truth about everything—about science and government and how to get along with the many many people who were beginning to fill up the world.

In Egypt and Asia the people were ruled and bossed by Kings, Pharaohs and Emperors. Only a few told all the rest what they had to do and how they could live. The Greeks, for the first time, gave to the world the idea that every one of us is important and should have something to say about the way we want to live.

They believed that if each of us is willing to do our share of helping others and learning to be wise and being brave and loyal to help protect us all from dan-

ger—then each of us has an equal right to help make the rules and laws we live by.

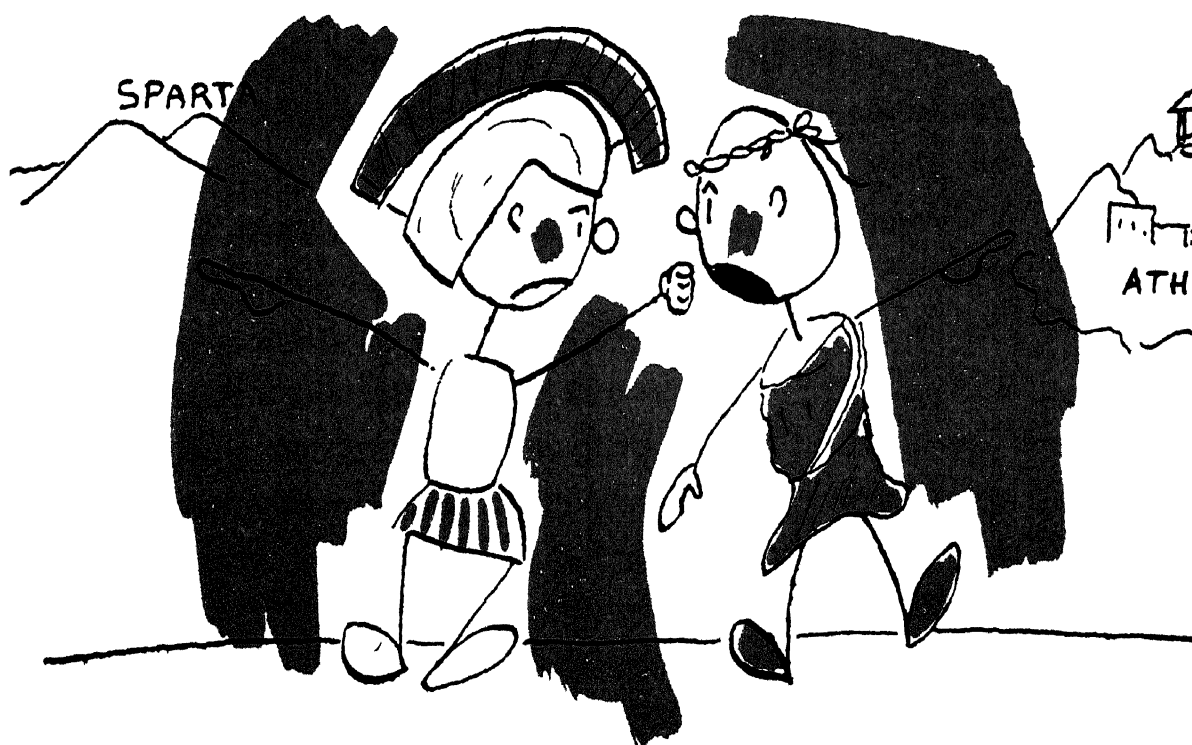
Later in this book we shall see how this old Greek idea of everyone being important has helped us to find the best way of governing Britain and the Commonwealth. Since everyone is important we want everyone to have a say.



As we move along in this little history of the world, we find that one people or another seem to lead or rule the rest for a while and then—whoops—they make a serious mistake and before long they are finished as the leaders, and somebody else takes their place.

Well, the Greeks made their big mistake, and the next people who took over the job of leadership were the Romans.

Before we talk about the Romans, though, we had better make a note of the main mistake that the Greeks made. While they were wise in many ways, they had one great fault that finally ruined them. It was that the different parts of Greece couldn't get along together among themselves.





ALEXANDER LEARNED GREEK WAYS WHEN HE
WAS A BOY. LATER HE SPREAD THEM
OVER HIS WHOLE EMPIRE

Each Greek city and the land right close to it ruled itself. There was great Athens and military Sparta and Corinth, Thebes, and about a hundred others. They all spoke the same language and joined together more or less when outsiders attacked them, as the Persians did twice, but the rest of the time they quarreled among themselves as to which city-state was going to boss the others.

In some ways they were like a family in which the brothers and sisters squabble so much they all suffer. Finally they fought wars against each other and that finished them, because a leader named Philip from Macedonia, in the hills north of them, came down and forced them all to get together and take orders from him. Then his son called Alexander the Great led the Greeks and his Greek-speaking Macedonians in a war conquering nearly all the world that people knew about then—Egypt, Mesopotamia, Persia and all Asia Minor, the Mediterranean islands and colonies, too. He was

the ruler of practically everybody for a short while, and he taught Greek ways to millions of people, but when he died, after only a few years of ruling, his generals divided the known world up again.

So we come to the Romans to find out—who they were—what they did that has so much to do with us today—and what mistakes they made that finished them off as the great leaders of their time.

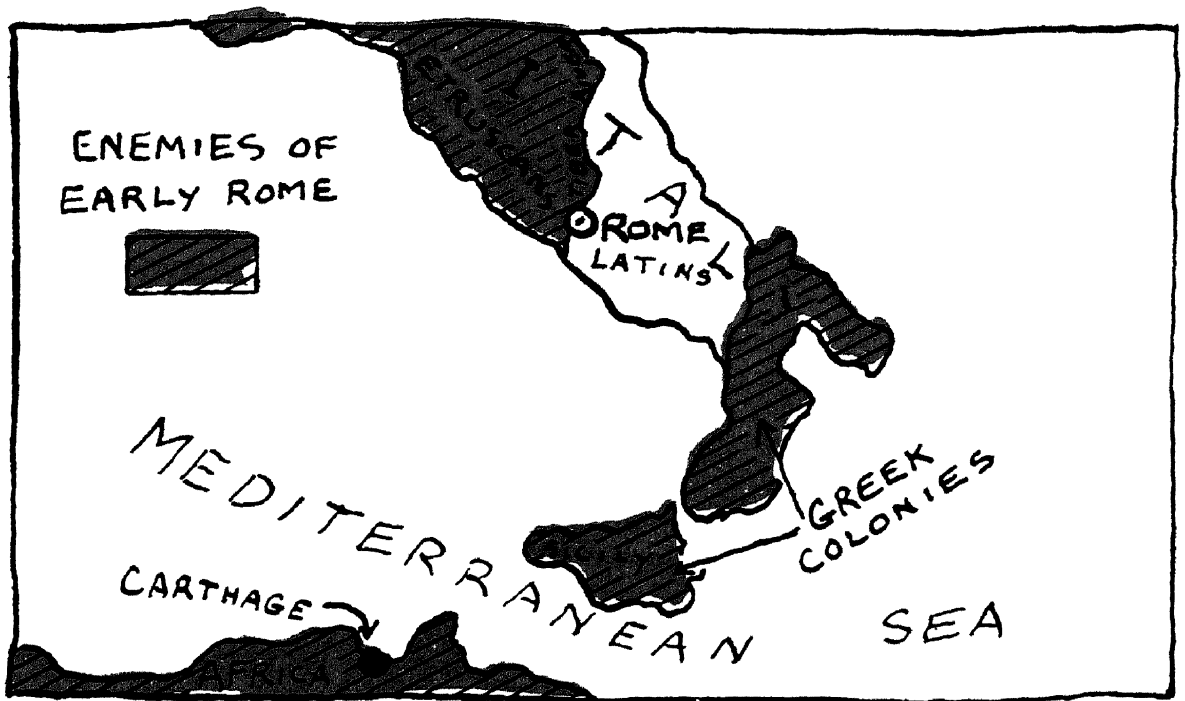


If you look back at our map of the ancient world you will see that over in the western part of the Mediterranean, Italy sticks down like a big boot into the most important sea of olden times. Around the same time the first Greek nomads were moving into the country they settled, other Indo-European nomads came down into the warm, sunny middle of this boot and stayed. They were called Latins, and they became good farmers in that fertile country. They didn't have any easy time of it though after they had built the city of Rome on the banks of the Tiber River. Rome was watched very carefully by jealous people called the Etruscans who lived north of them, by the Greek colonists who lived south of them and by the Carthaginians who lived in North Africa just across the Mediterranean Sea from Italy.

As these courageous Latin farmers grew stronger through the years and made allies around them and conquered their jealous neighbours, their city of Rome grew to be very powerful. Learning much from the Greeks whom they admired very much and imitated in many ways, they became traders and merchants too.

Carthage, in North Africa, had been settled long before by the Phoenicians, who had come from the far-away eastern coast of the Mediterranean near Mesopotamia, and until the Romans grew strong they had been the boss sailors and merchants of the western part of the old world.

Carthage and Rome went to war against each other



and, though Carthage had one famous general named Hannibal who crossed the Alps with an army and almost completely defeated the Romans, Rome won in the end. They destroyed Carthage entirely and by the time the three sections of the Eastern Mediterranean world were squabbling and fighting among themselves Rome was the greatest power in the west. Alexander's great empire had been divided and weakened under his generals, and, before many years of history had passed, the Romans marched and sailed eastward and were rulers and law makers of the whole Mediterranean world.

You may easily wonder how a simple farming people with their city-state of Rome rose to such power that they could tell the whole rest of the ancient world what to do.

What made them great was that they had the sense to try to learn from others' mistakes, to do better by copying what was good and throwing away ways that were bad and led to failure. They often had a hard time living up to this themselves. They had strong men and leaders who were bad, as well as good ones. Some grew too rich by dishonesty and selfishness, many were cruel and at times gave cheap and disgusting excitement to the poor people instead of honestly trying to make their lives better. However, for hundreds of years the old world was in better shape because of good Romans than it had ever been before. Those best Romans gave three ways of doing things to the rest of the world that best people of our times try to follow in our own country today.

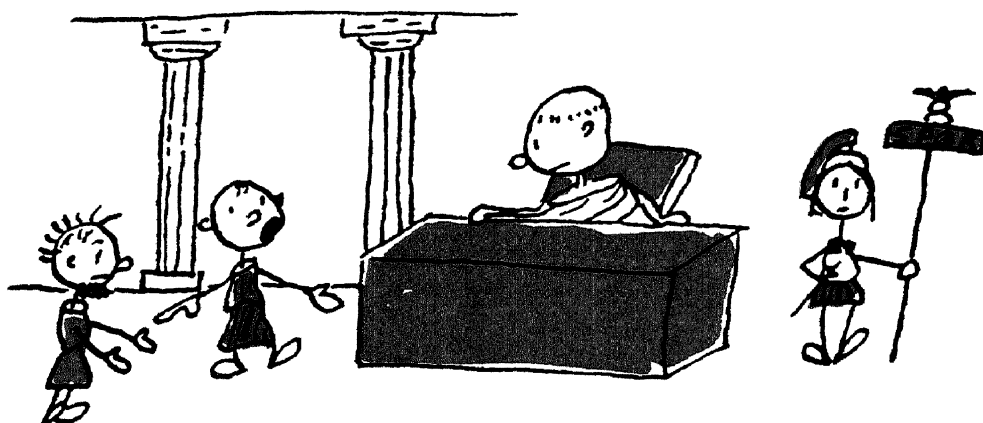
Three Great Roman Gifts To Us

- I The Rights of Man
- II Order Under Law
- III We Don't Live Alone

I

The Romans had learned from the earlier Greeks that human beings at all ages need to feel that they are important and want to have some say in how they shall live. Their wisest leaders tried to give the Roman people a feeling of pride in their country because it was really their country and they were helping to make it great in the way they helped to choose. Copying, imitating, improving and spreading the good things of many

countries—buildings, art, science and government—they carried some civilizations far and wide in their pride of being Romans.

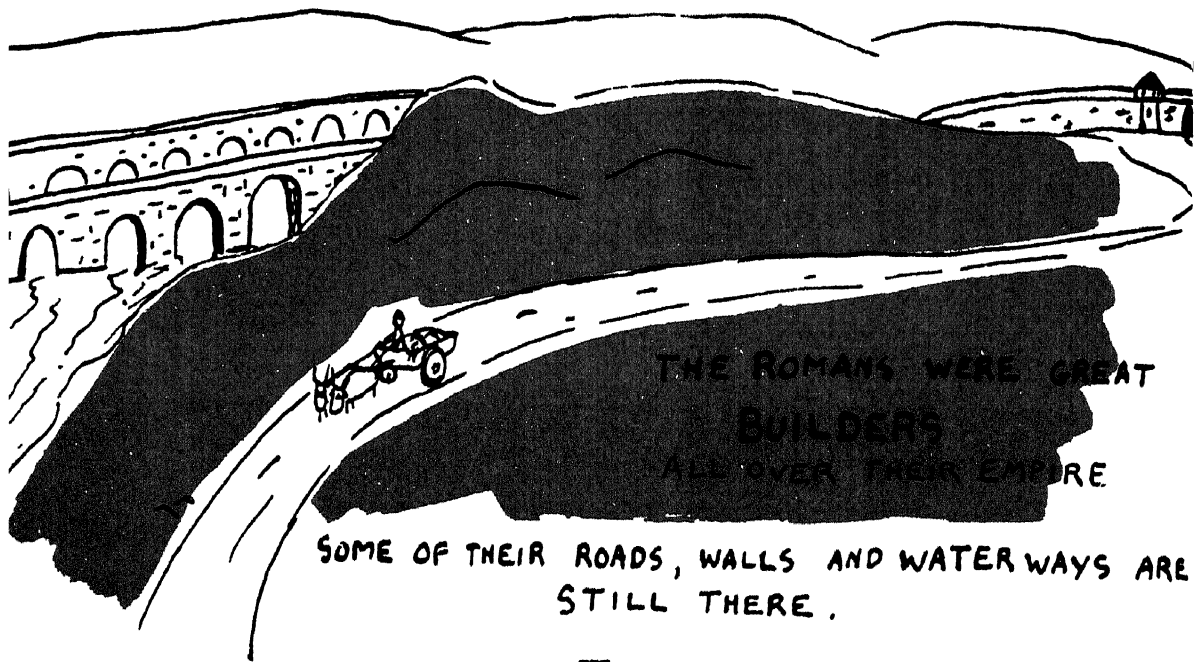


FAIR TRIALS AND JUSTICE

II

Probably the greatest gift of the Romans to us was Law. They believed that people of the world could get along best if they all obeyed rules for living decently together. Those rules had to be right and fair and just, and had to be obeyed by everyone—not just those who felt like it. The best Romans felt that all men who were willing to be educated and grow wise enough to help should have a say in making those laws and seeing that they were carried out. The famous Roman Legions of citizen-soldiers marched and sailed all over the ancient world from England to Egypt to see that the laws were obeyed.

In the best years of Roman rule these laws made peace and order that brought some happiness into what had been a scared and worried world of everlasting brawls and fights and wars.



III

The Romans realized better than some people seem to even today that We Do Not Live Alone. They knew that trouble and fighting and disorder in one part of the world sooner or later would affect people everywhere. That is one of the reasons why they went into new lands and tried to set up government and law that would let the people there live in peace. They were wise enough to know that all peoples are not exactly alike, so they let them help make their own best rules.

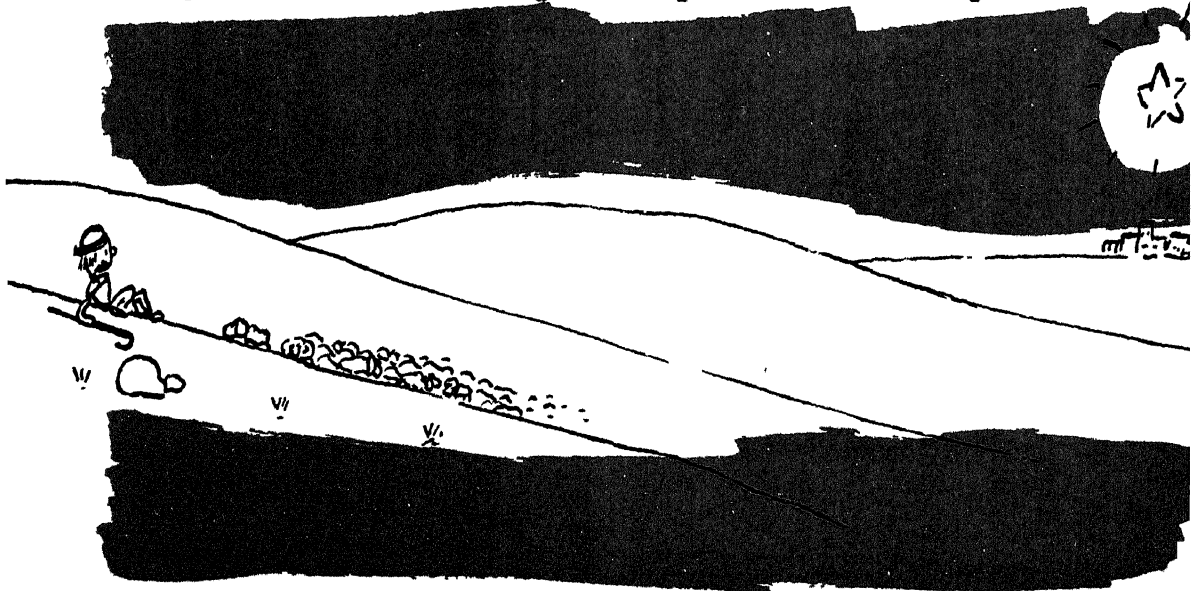
In one way the Romans were different from most of the ruling people before them: they let other people think and believe and worship as they wanted to, as long as they behaved themselves.

Jesus Christ was born in a faraway part of the Roman Empire called Judea in Palestine, and he and his followers started the great Christian religions that are now believed in by millions of people in the western world.

As we shall see later, most of Rome and Italy and all Europe became Christian in time, and we now date the years of history as so many years B. C. (Before Christ's birth) or so many years A. D. (Anno Domini—that means "In the year of our Lord" after his birth.) 1955 A.D. means one thousand, nine hundred and fifty-five years after the birth of Christ.

Rome did a lot that was good for the world, but the Romans, too, made mistakes in trying to control the world's millions of people, and by the year 500 A. D. the Great Roman Empire had fallen apart and crude uncivilized tribes of barbarians from the lands to the north in Europe poured into Rome itself and ruled it. The people of Rome had become too selfish. Looking only for more and more luxury and excitement, they no longer worked for each other's good and their long years of leadership came to an end.

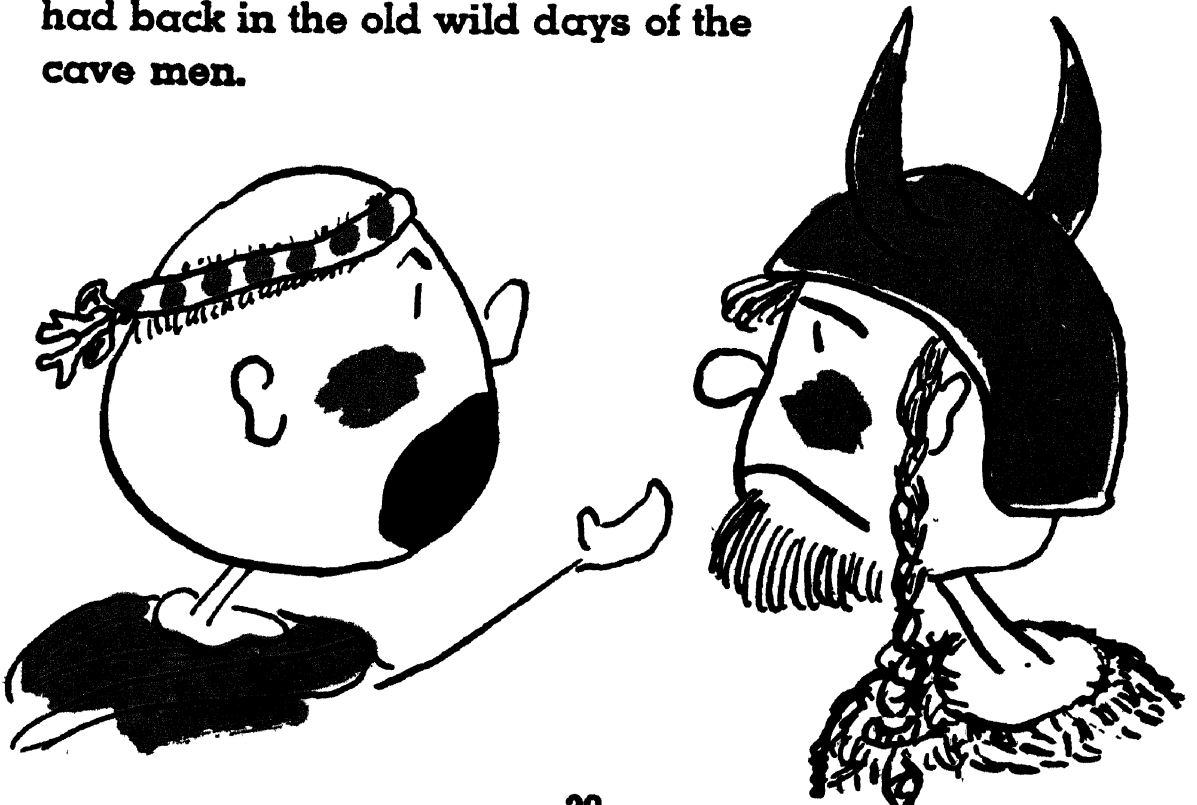
Those crude Barbarians who came down on Rome were the closer ancestors of most of us, so when Rome fell the people who write histories say that it marked the end of Ancient World History, and we now come to the years of mankind's story that they call the Middle Ages.



Now you would certainly think that after about 5000 years of men knowing how to write and pass information and experience on to each other and with lots of practice in living together under all kinds of rulers, the people of the world would begin to get along pretty well. They had surely learned a lot about building from each other, so they didn't have to huddle in caves hiding from wild animals, and they had seen how ships and good roads and horses, carts and chariots could make travel and trade easier. They had found wonderful ways to raise food and use wood, stone and clay and metals so they could make life easier and more beautiful. At times they had even had peace and order enough for a while to begin to enjoy themselves—

BUT

with all this behind them, people still quarreled, wrangled and fought each other nearly as much as they had back in the old wild days of the cave men.




SO—

for almost a thousand years that came after the fall of Rome to the time when Columbus found America in 1492 A. D. it was a fairly sad and dangerous and dreary world to live in for most of the people during those Middle Ages.

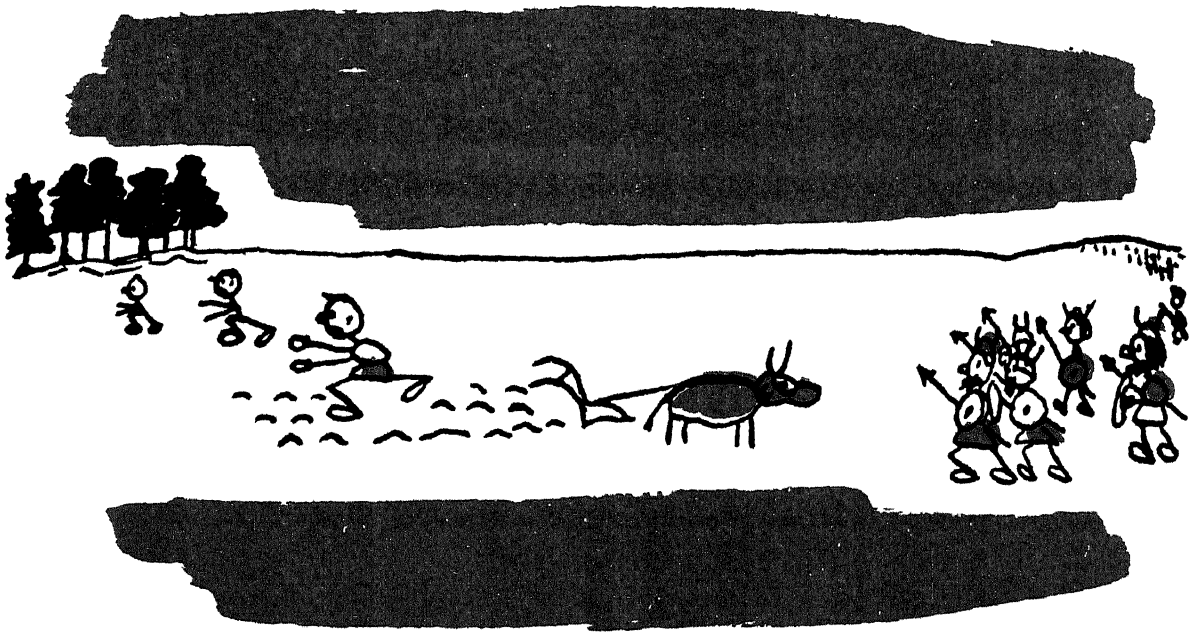
Don't forget that when people tell you about the Middle Ages, they are talking about Europe. If you asked a Chinese what the Middle Ages were like in his country he would not understand you, and if you said "Oh, you know, those rather sad thousand years before 1492 A.D.", he would explain that during those thousand years his country had some of the most glorious periods in her history.

But we can't learn everybody's history at once. So we must start with finding out what happened in Europe. Our ancestors came from there and in the Middle Ages we were in a way more part of Europe than we are now, with a Commonwealth spread all over the world.

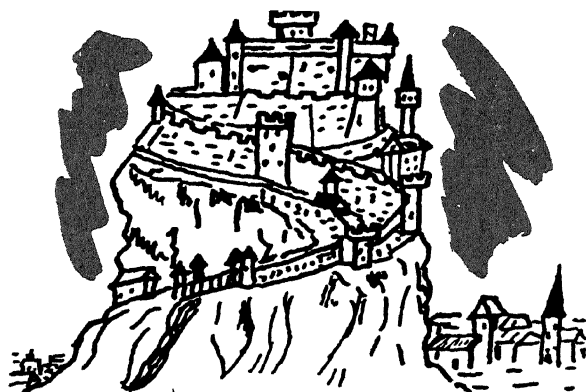


IN EUROPE
OF THE
DARK AGES
SCIENCE, BEAUTY,
LEARNING AND FAIRNESS
WERE ALMOST
FORGOTTEN

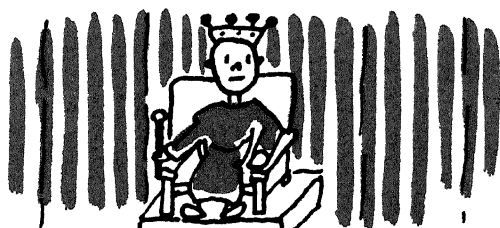
Gangs and tribes and hordes of wild, ignorant people who didn't know much about all the things the Egyptians, Greeks or Romans had learned, and who seemed to care even less, were pushing, shoving and fighting their ways over nearly all of Europe.



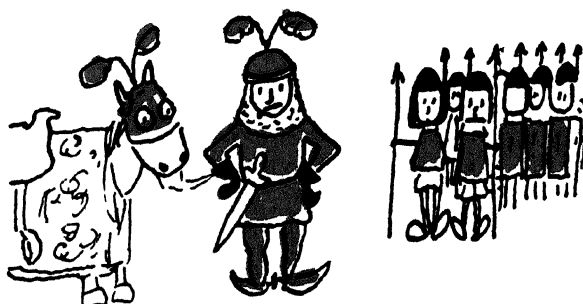
In their scramblings just to keep alive, one big gang would chase another away from lands they wanted, and the ones who were beaten and scared off would do the same thing to others who were even weaker than they. Things were so bad for so long that after a while when most of the Europeans had finally learned how to use stone for buildings and quieted down at least a little bit, their leaders built castles and forts so their people could run from their fields to them for protection when new enemies showed up.



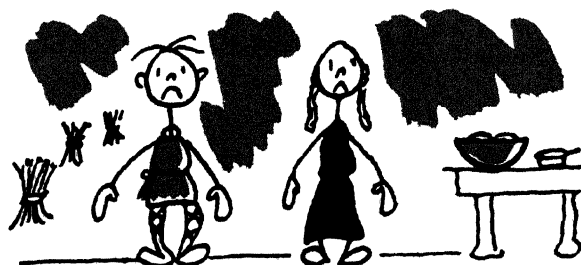
VILLAGES AND TOWNS GREW UP
AROUND THE CASTLE FORTS



KINGS TRIED TO RULE
WHOLE COUNTRIES - BUT



STRONG LORDS, BARONS AND
CHIEFS WITH THEIR OWN
CASTLES AND ARMIES DID
PRETTY MUCH WHAT THEY WANTED.



POOR WORKING PEOPLE
HAD TO PAY FOR PROTECTION
FROM NEARLY EVERYBODY

This was the way the Feudal System got started in Europe and it lasted for a long time. A chief, or lord or baron or knight, or whatever he was called, depending on how much land he ruled, would keep an army handy in his castle-fort to protect his lands and people, or if he felt like it, to go capture somebody else's lands and people.

The only way a poor man who was trying to raise food for himself and his family could ever hope to live in any peace at all was to serve one of these strong chiefs. If he were lucky and had a good chief, he only had to pay part of his crops and the animals he raised each year and work a certain part of the time for his master in order to be able to keep his own little piece of land and stay alive. You can see that in spite of all the modern pretty pictures we sometimes see of knights and castles, life was no pleasant picnic in those days.

It is a good thing for our ancestors, and so for us, that there were many fine and noble knights and barons and other leaders who hon-

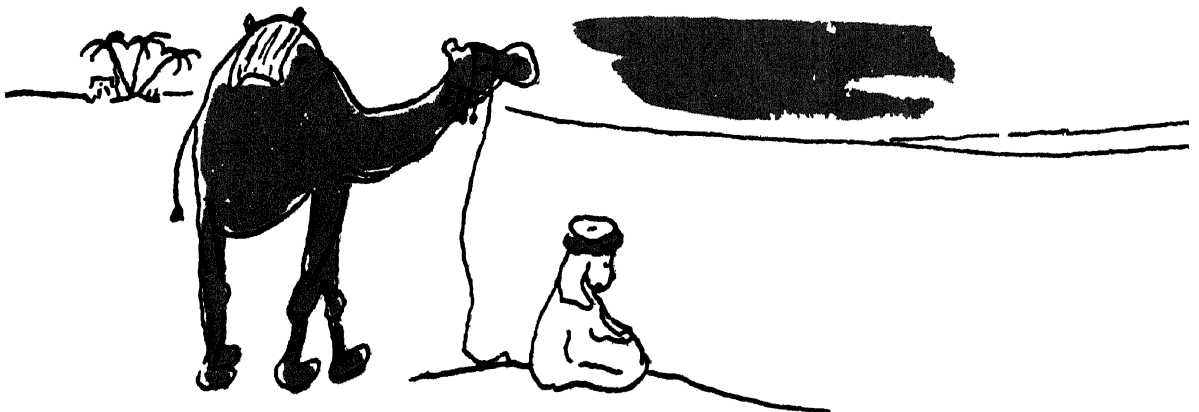
estly tried hard to keep their people from suffering too much in this gang warfare.

Strange as it may seem in the face of all the fighting and killing that went on, the Christian religion with its teaching of a better way to live spread more and more through Europe. Many of the chiefs and knights protected the churchmen who taught Christianity and kept alive some of the learning of civilization and the finer things that had been discovered in the past. Churches and abbeys and monasteries were built and people gave help to them and received help from them.

Far away in Arabia, something happened that was to bring more of the best of the old forgotten Mediterranean civilization to the people of Europe. Through war and travel and trading a whole new rebirth of learning and interest in living came to the West.

A new religion had been started in Western Asia by an Arab named Mohammed. His followers, called Mohammedans or Moslems, spread their religion and conquered most of the lands of Western Asia, North Africa and Spain.

Among the lands they captured was what the Chris-

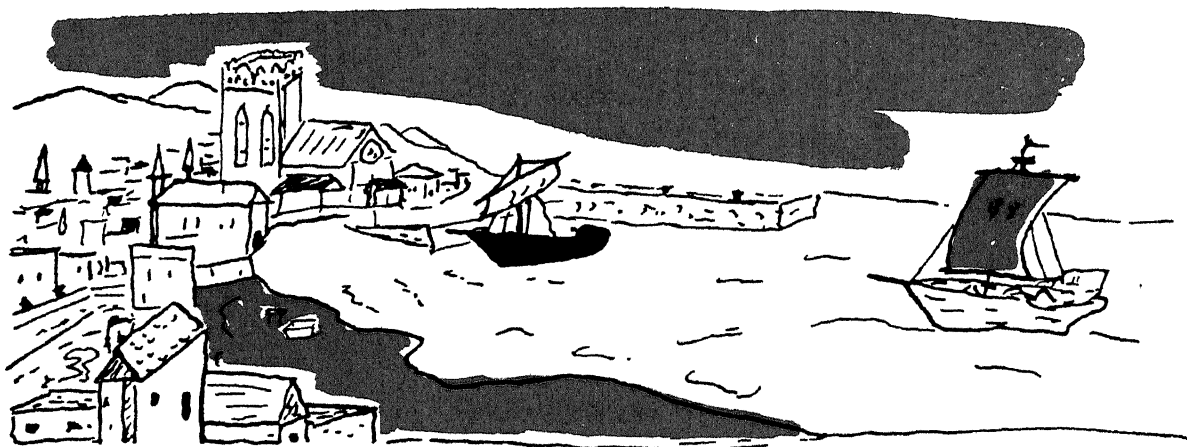


tians call the Holy Land, where Christ was born. So wars started that are known as the Crusades. Leaders from Western Europe, kings and nobles and knights and ordinary men, women and children marched and sailed to reach far-off Palestine to save it from the Moslem Turks. Many suffered and died on both sides as in all wars, and sometimes the Christians were successful for a while and then the Moslems.

When it was all over and a sort of peace was declared, some good had come out of all the trouble and misery—The Crusaders and their people knew more about civilized ways of living, and the good we often find in our enemies. They learned that the world is big and full of wonderful opportunities to make life better for all of us, if we will only try.

It is a queer twist of history that these Europeans had to go so far to strange lands in war to learn for the first time many of the truths that the old Greeks, Macedonians and Romans had taught to and learned from the people of the East long before the Crusades ever started. In some ways it was like walking to Edinburgh from London to find out something your father could have told you before you left if you had only been willing to listen to him.



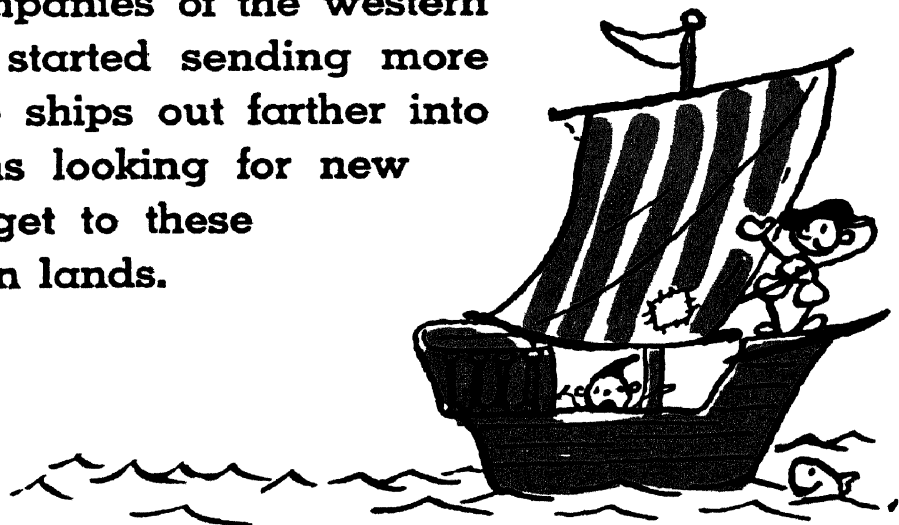


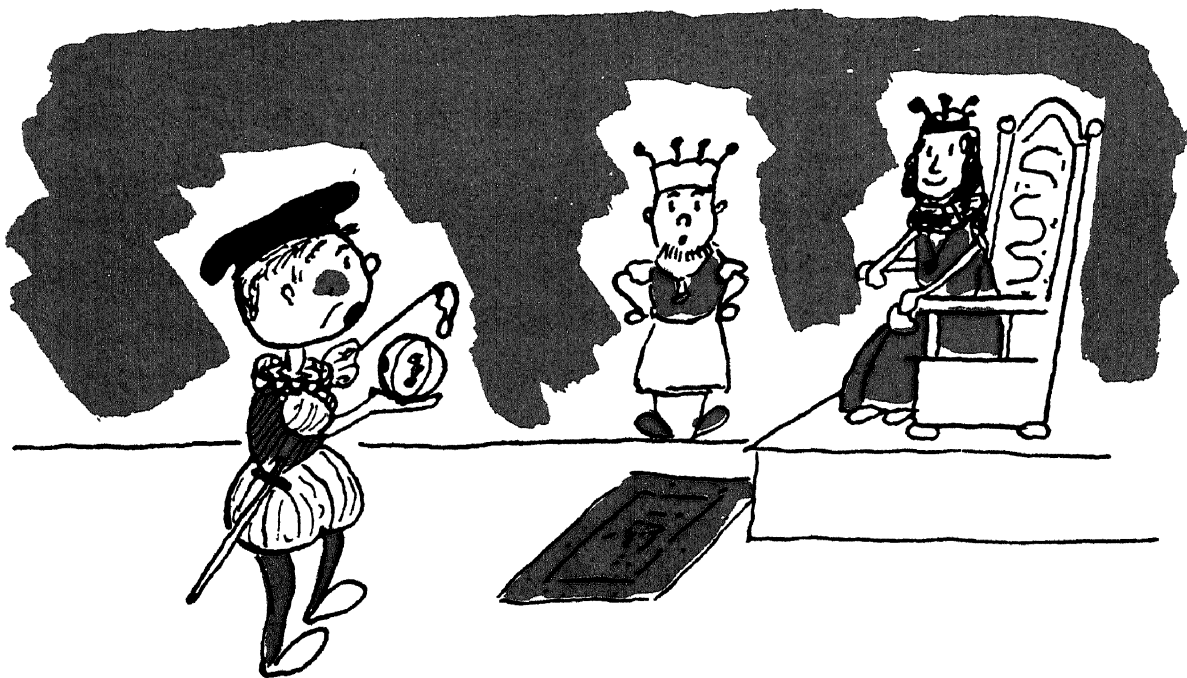
As the hundreds of years of the Middle Ages went by, schools and universities started to grow along with the beautiful churches and cathedrals. The teachers were very often churchmen, and the old Latin language of Rome was the language of educated people all over Europe. There weren't too many of them, but old Greek and Roman books began to be copied and studied again after the Crusades, so people took an interest in thinking and trying to learn once more.

Towns and cities began to grow, especially seaports where trade with the East and other countries grew more and more. People started moving into the towns to work at crafts and trades. Business, shops, merchants and bankers began to make money through trade with foreign countries. People began to think of themselves as citizens of this or that city instead of the serf or servant of some castle-owning chief. As the cities grew stronger and the chiefs and nobles became weaker, they began to obey the kings and emperors. They paid taxes to them, furnished armies for them and Europe started to divide up into the countries and nations that were something like those that are there today.

Toward the end of the Middle Ages the big trading cities in Northern Italy were sending merchant ships steadily to the far eastern ends of the Mediterranean. There they were picking up cargoes of cloths, silks, jewels, perfumes and spices that had been carried from the faraway Asian lands of India, China, the Spice Islands and other countries of the Far East. Travelers had wandered overland to some of these places and one man named Marco Polo from the Italian trading city of Venice had come back and written a book about his wonderful journeys in this mysterious Asia. His book and tales of other travelers made the people, particularly the sailors and merchants of Europe, want to reach these distant lands with all their riches. If you are wondering why they bothered so much about spices, it was because they didn't know how to keep meat from spoiling without spices, and if it was a little bad the spices made it taste better.

When Moslem Turks captured the strong Mediterranean city of Constantinople and shut off western trade with the East over land, the rulers and rich merchant companies of the western countries started sending more and more ships out farther into the oceans looking for new ways to get to these far Eastern lands.



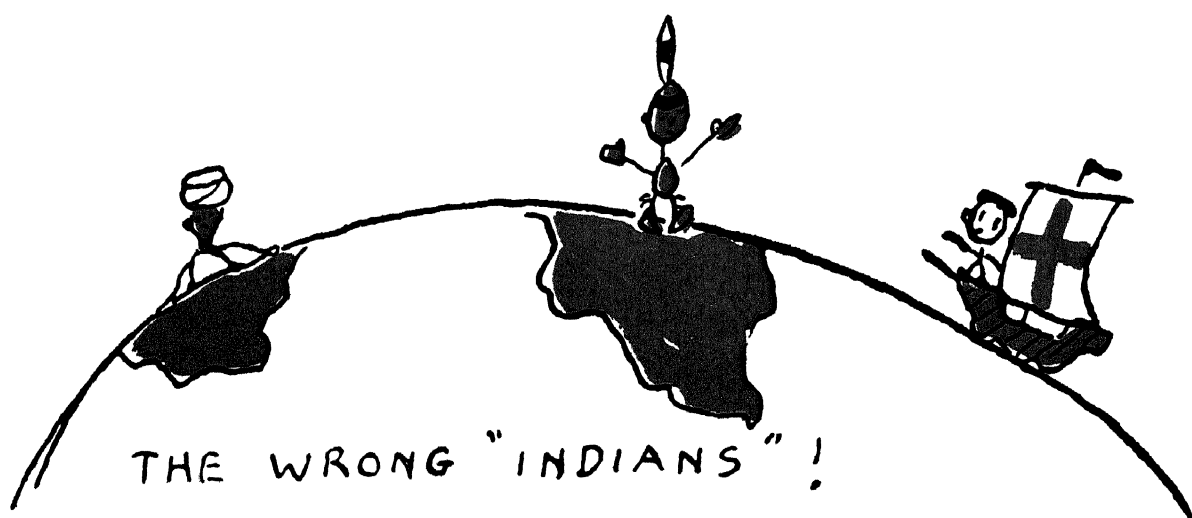


Sailors from the little country of Portugal found that it was possible to get to Asia by sailing all the way around Africa. They started a trade so rich that all Europe got excited.

Some of the great Greek thinkers who had lived way back in the time of Alexander's empire in Egypt had believed that the earth was round, and one of them named Eratosthenes had by science come within fifty miles of telling its true size. Christopher Columbus, who went from Genoa in Italy to Spain, knew of the old Greek studies and he, too, believed the world was round. He asked the Queen and King of Spain for ships so he could sail to Asia by going westward across the Atlantic Ocean. He didn't know—nor did anybody else in Europe or Asia—that the continents of North and South America and the big Pacific Ocean were between Europe and faraway Asia.

The Spanish rulers, who had finally conquered the Moslems in their country, gave Columbus some ships and he started West. We all now know that he found America, but even after several voyages back again Columbus died still thinking that America was part of Asia. That was why he called the red men he found here "Indians," because he thought they were natives of the India that is clear around on the other side of the world.

More and more voyages of discovery were made, and after a while a ship that started from Spain under the leadership of Ferdinand Magellan sailed all the way around the world. From then on the old world turned its eyes on the new world and the whole world, so we call this age of the great sailing discoveries the start of Modern History.





THE WORLD WE KNOW TODAY COMPARED TO THE LITTLE
CIRCLE OF THE WORLD THE ANCIENTS KNEW

Before we read about the world's happenings as they get closer to our own times, we should understand at least a little about the Far Eastern countries of India and China, Japan and the Asian northland of Mongolia. All these lands had people living in them thousands of years ago, and though very few of the people we have read about so far even knew they lived at all, they, too, had civilizations, great rulers, religions, great thinkers, scholars and inventors. The Chinese are believed to have invented the compass, paper as we make it today, printing and gunpowder—to mention only a few things that have had great effect on the history of the whole world.

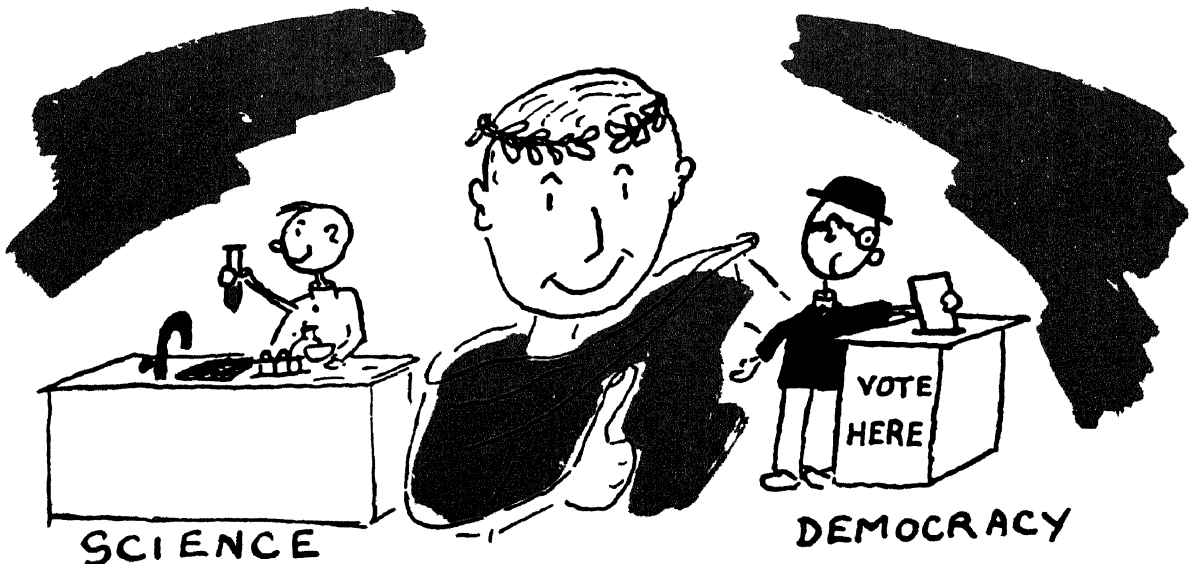
The millions who live in India today have carried on for thousands of years a culture and civilization that has much to teach the people of all lands. At one time the

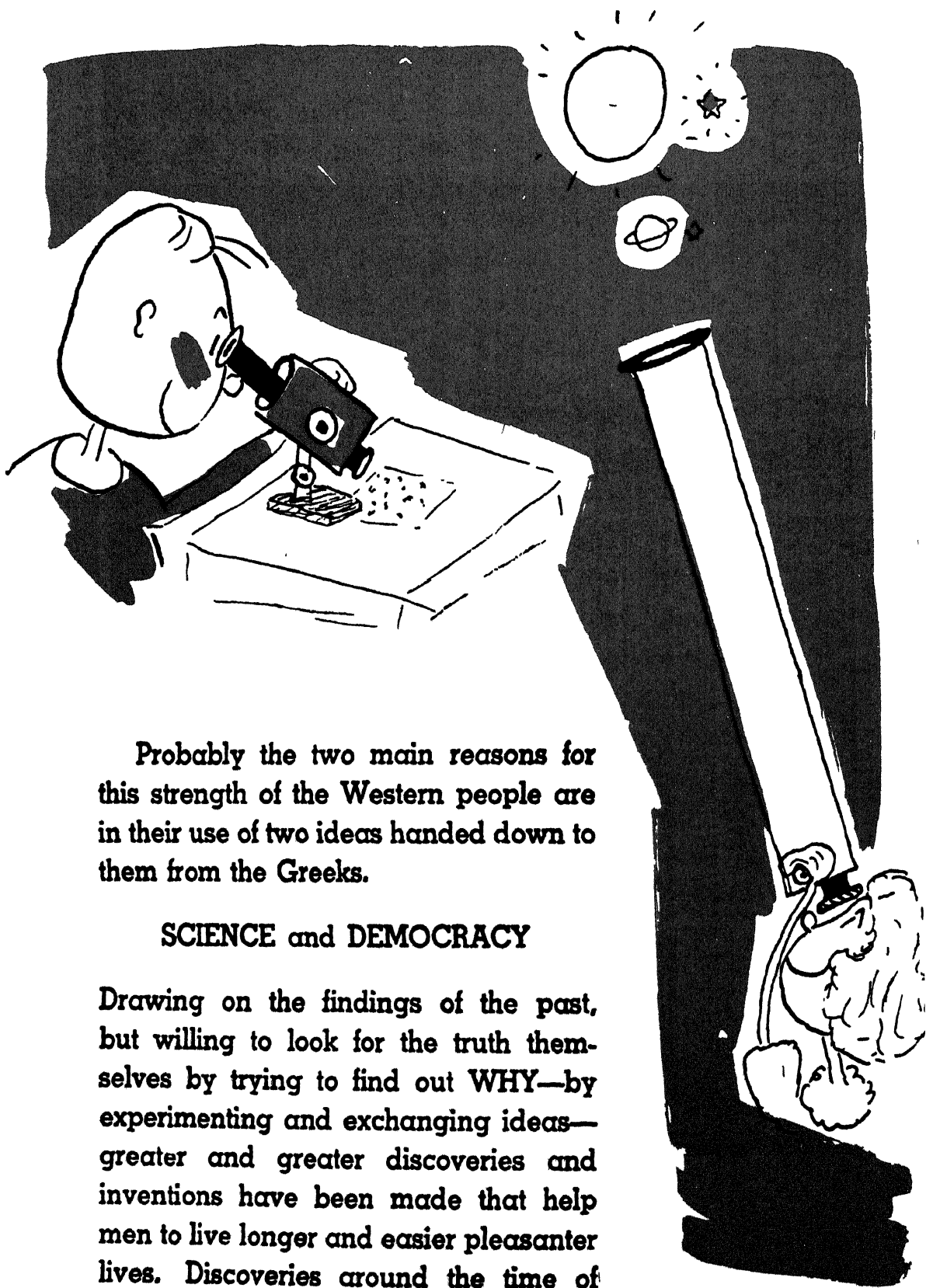
powerful warrior-emperors or Khans of the Mongol people who lived in the northern part of Asia came very close to conquering and ruling the whole known world, both East and West.

Japan, the country of islands, had water barriers that allowed it to develop without much contact with the outside world for thousands of years. Even up to a hundred years ago they tried hard to keep it this way.

It seems a little odd to call the years around 1500 A. D. "Modern Times," but with all the thousands of years of history a little matter of four or five hundred years seems short if you're just reading about it.

This Modern Age that we start to write about when new parts of the world were being discovered has been led and mostly ruled by the people of Europe and their children's children. It is true that no one great nation has ruled all the rest, the way Rome did in her strongest days, and it is certainly true that the modern Western nations have seemed to suffer the old mistake of the Greeks—they have fought and fought among themselves—BUT Western ways of thinking and doing things have been the strongest and have spread all over the world of today.





Probably the two main reasons for this strength of the Western people are in their use of two ideas handed down to them from the Greeks.

SCIENCE and DEMOCRACY

Drawing on the findings of the past, but willing to look for the truth themselves by trying to find out WHY—by experimenting and exchanging ideas—greater and greater discoveries and inventions have been made that help men to live longer and easier pleasanter lives. Discoveries around the time of Columbus of the use of the lens so we could make microscopes and telescopes

opened up worlds as new as the ones the sailors found. Some of the mysteries of life and power and the nature of all kinds of material were uncovered in the searching for truths that still goes on and on.

Democracy is the name we give to the "rule of the people," and in the Commonwealth where we each have a say in how we want our countries to be run, we have found that men work best together when they all obey laws that have been made and agreed to by all of them—not forced on them by others.

One of the greatest helps of democracy was the start of printing in Europe around Columbus' time. For the first time books could be read and owned by thousands of people instead of just a few. Knowledge spread wider and wider and real education of the people was on its way.



INVENTION OF PRINTING PRESS

So far we've been talking mostly about the world around the Mediterranean Sea and then about Europe. But now that we've reached "Modern Times" you will be wanting to hear more about your own particular corner of history. So now let's move the spotlight around and have it light up

BRITAIN

and

THE BRITISH COMMONWEALTH

Columbus probably wasn't much interested in these islands of ours. English cloth and Englishwomen's embroidery he would know about. They were famous. But a seafaring man, a citizen of the great port of Genoa who was now in the service of mighty Spain—he surely had little to learn from the inhabitants of a little group of islands lying far away off the north-western part of the mainland of Europe.

Yet it was Columbus who put our islands on the map. Once the way to America was shown, the future lay with the countries which looked towards the Atlantic.

Our ancestors were ready to grasp this chance which fortune offered them. They were a tough, mongrel breed. Let's look back for a moment and see how they came to be that way. During those thousands of years during which the Greeks and the Romans had moved into Europe and had each been a great leader in turn and finally had to give way before the barbarians, what had been going on in Britain?

Where our earliest ancestors came from is uncertain but it is likely that they included some of those Indo-Europeans who in the dim past moved across Asia and into nearly every part of the western world.

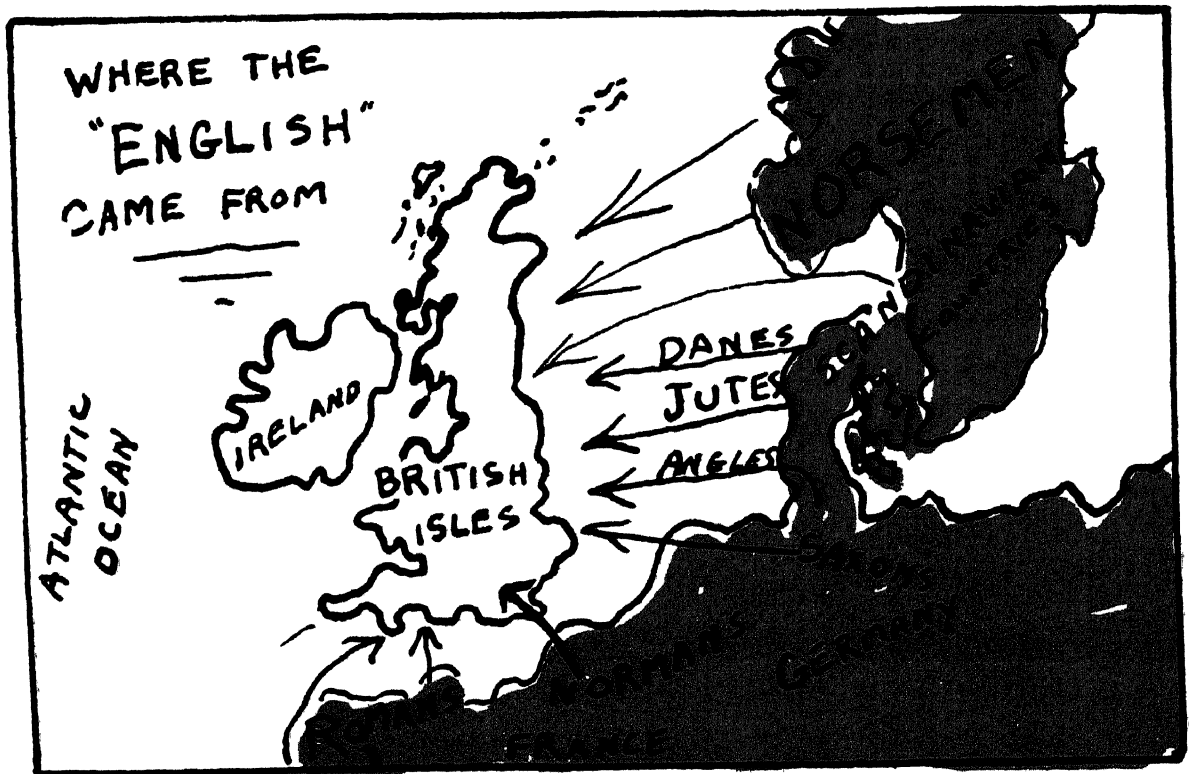


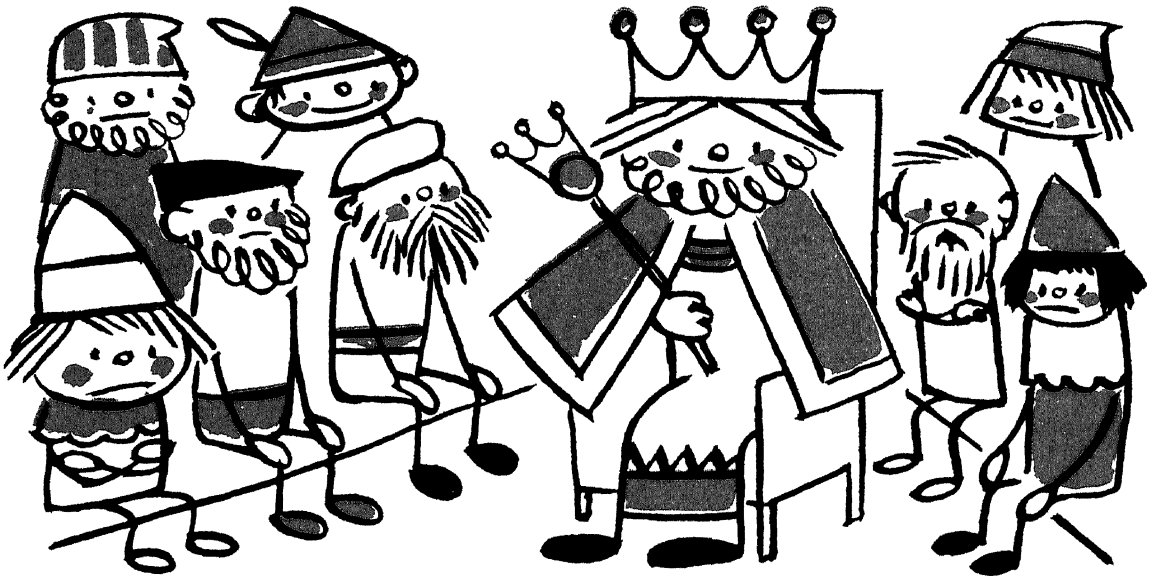
When Julius Caesar, one of the greatest Roman leaders—maybe the greatest—sailed over to Britain from the coast of France in the year 55 B. C. (about two thousand years ago), he found people there who were a long way from being civilized, compared to the people of Rome and Greece. They knew next to nothing about reading, writing, building or the arts and crafts that had been steadily improved in the Eastern world. What tools and weapons they had were crude and clumsy, so they had a lot to learn from the Romans, who made Britain part of their big Empire and tried to rule it so there could be peace and order and improvement. The Romans were in England for several hundred years, and some of the roads they made and towns and walls they built are still there, but, when Rome grew weak at home, and the Roman legions left, a new and rougher, tougher people came next.

Along the shores of the North Sea in what we now call Germany there lived tribes of mostly fair-haired, blue-eyed people who were pretty wild and full of fight. They were the Angles, the Saxons and the Jutes and they all sent raiders and after a while settlers to live in parts of Britain. They had hardly more than begun to quiet down and live together half peacefully when the fierce Viking raiders of the Scandinavian lands, Norway and Sweden and Denmark, started landing from their fast long ships, and Britain had still more people mixing together to make her a nation of great seamen. 1066 years after the birth of Christ, more Northmen or Norsemen or Normans, who had lived in France for years,

came over to England under the leadership of William who came to be called the Conqueror. This was the last time in our history that we were overrun by invaders, but many peaceful people came over later. Often the reason was that they were being persecuted because of their religion. These refugees brought with them many valuable crafts.

So we are mongrels of mixed blood and the language we speak is mongrel too. It has words taken from all the different peoples who have settled here, and our customs and laws and ways of living have been built up over hundreds of years from the different ways of these many different people.





There were four hundred years between William the Conqueror and the time of Columbus—four hundred years for the Roman-Anglo-Saxon-Danish-Norman mongrel to grow into a well-bred mastiff who knew how to look after himself.

Englishmen had taken part in the Crusades and in many wars, both abroad and among themselves. Great castles had been built and serfs had groaned as they toiled to feed and clothe the nobles who lived in them. But great monasteries and cathedrals had grown up too and towns had prospered just the same as had happened in Europe.

And there were plenty of signs that Englishmen didn't like being bossed around. The nobles met together to advise the King. This was the beginning of Parliament. Serfs gradually won their freedom and found a better life in the towns. This was the beginning of democracy.

Henry VIII who ruled England towards the beginning of Modern Times is remembered for a number of reasons,

not all good ones. He was fat and he had six wives in turn. He seized the lands of the monasteries. He said that he, Henry, and not the Pope was head of the Church in England. He had fine palaces built. He gave England a navy. But whatever you think of him there's no doubt he helped Englishmen to feel tough and independent.

So when his daughter, Queen Elizabeth I, came to the throne she had no difficulty in finding among her subjects the kind of men England needed. Everyone remembers Drake's voyage round the world and how he beat the Spanish Armada in 1588. In that great age seamen and merchants from England were finding their way north, south, east and west. It was then that the foundations



of the British Commonwealth were laid. If you want to know exactly when it began, it was on the day in 1583 when Sir Humphrey Gilbert started the colonization of Newfoundland.

Some years later Captain John Smith started a settlement in what is now the State of Virginia, U.S.A., but Americans think of the Pilgrim Fathers, who came over in 1620 as the real founders of their country. "Thanksgiving," the great American festival in November, when they eat turkey and pumpkin pie, is in memory of the thanksgiving service held by the Pilgrims after their first harvest in the New World.

Meantime in Europe there was a lot of fighting about religion. Some rulers tried to make people worship God one way and some another. One terrible war went on for thirty years. Thousands of people were killed and many more made unhappy. Britain kept out of this mostly, but we had our own troubles.

King Charles I quarrelled with Parliament. In those days the King still had a great deal of power but he could not do without Parliament altogether. He could not make people pay taxes without asking Parliament. King Charles decided to try. This led to the worst of all wars, a war in which citizens of the same country fight each other—a Civil War. Two brothers could find themselves on opposite sides. A father might have to fight against his son.

The Parliament side won and Charles I was beheaded on a winter's day in 1649. For a time there was no King in Britain. Oliver Cromwell ruled and was known as Protector. But after his death King Charles's son was brought back and there has been a King or a Queen on

the throne of Britain ever since.

And what about democracy and science all this time?

Well, whatever you may think about the cutting off of Charles's head, most people would agree that democracy took a step forward as a result of the Civil War. John Hampden, who took the lead in refusing to pay Charles's taxes is honoured still.

Science went right ahead, too, in spite of all the unrest caused by the Civil War. William Harvey, who was



Charles I's doctor, discovered the circulation of the blood. Anyone learns this in a first aid class now and understands how important it is. Yet no one before Harvey knew about it. Not the Greeks with all their interest in science. Not the Romans with all their common sense and bridge-building and road making.

Charles II took a great interest in science. That's why Britain's foremost scientific society is called the ROYAL Society.

So there were better telescopes and pumps and clocks and one specially good thing was that people stopped believing in witches. For centuries everyone had believed in witches. Women had been hunted down and tortured and put to death for witch-craft. In the new scientific age people suddenly realised what cruel nonsense it had all been. Witch-hunting went out of fashion for good.

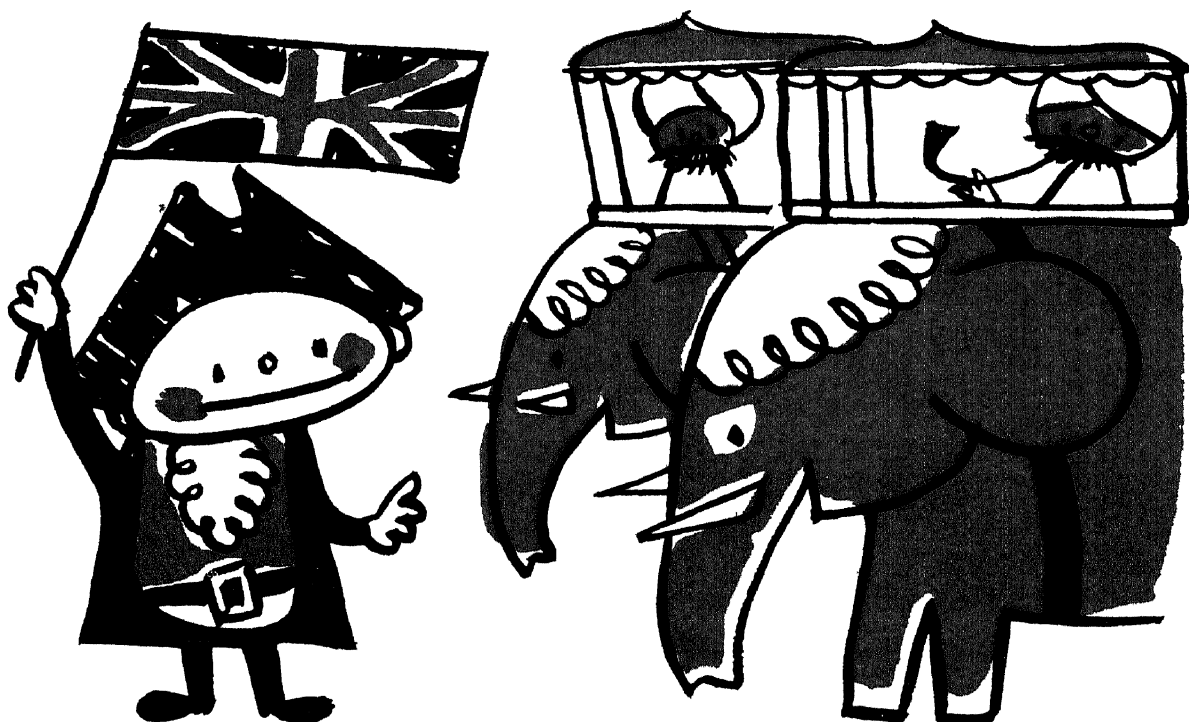
In the eighteenth century, or the "seventeen hundreds"—it's easier to remember that way—there was a lot happening in the British possessions overseas, the countries which were later to become the British Commonwealth and the United States. You remember that though Drake was always fighting the Spaniards England did not plant colonies in their part of the world. The Spaniards were left in South America while not only the English but also the French and the Dutch all found room to prosper in the northern half of the continent.

In the East-Indies, Burma and what we now call South East Asia, where the Portuguese had had it all their own way, English, French and Dutch gradually began to get a foothold. But there was not room for everyone. In the



18th century—the “seventeen hundreds”—the countries who wanted colonies had to fight it out.

In North America the British got the better of the Dutch and the French. There was General Wolfe’s great victory at Quebec. But this did not mean that the French were thrown out of Canada. Quebec province is French-speaking still. It was the original inhabitants of the country, the Red Indians, who gradually disappeared.

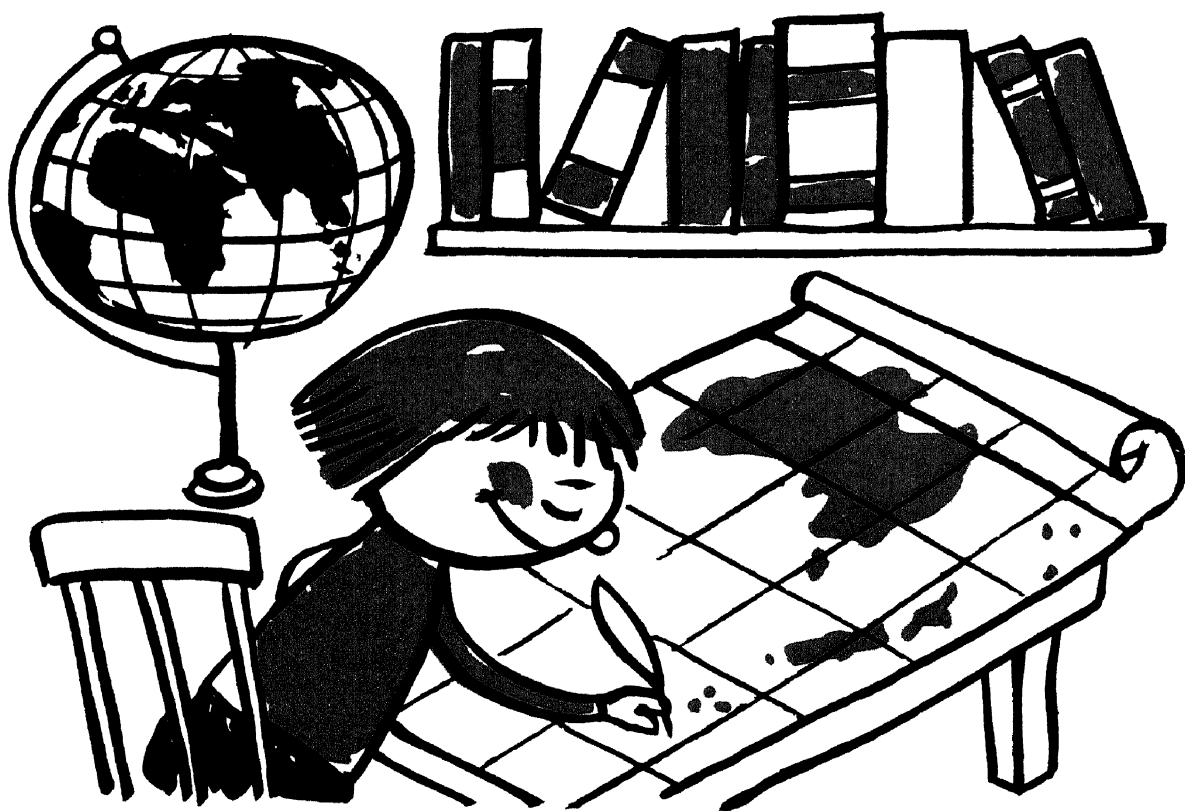


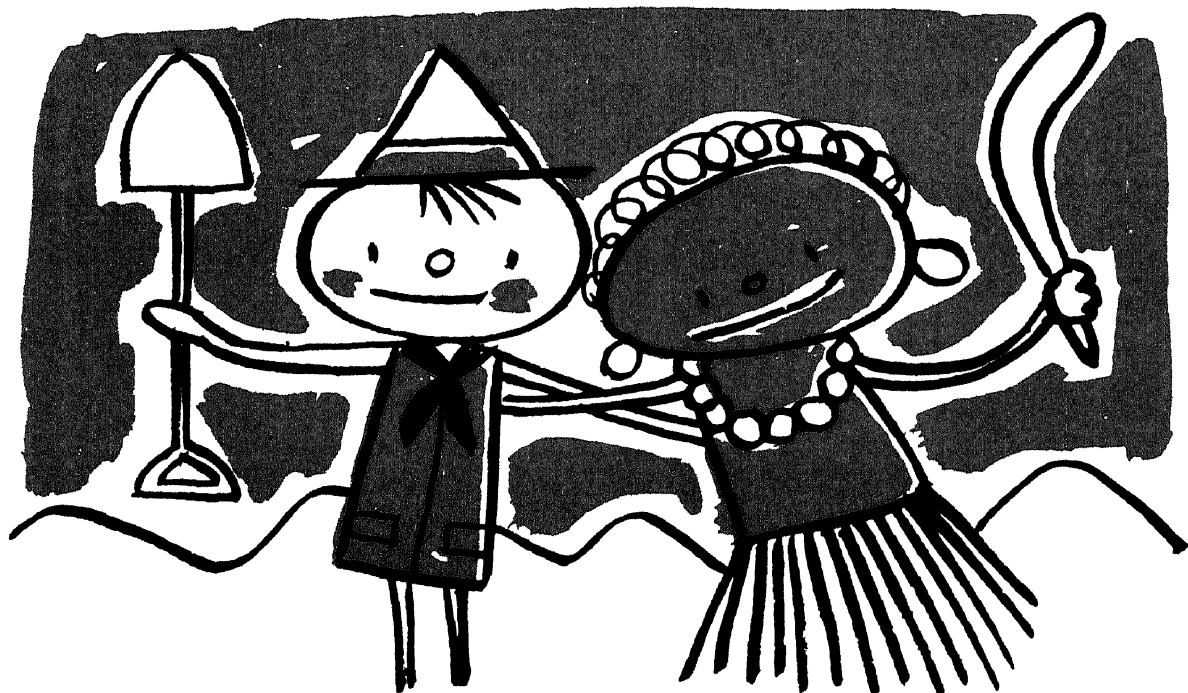
But while the colonists dealt harshly with the Red Indians, the government at home dealt harshly with the colonists. The trouble was started by taxes which the American colonists did not want to pay to Britain. This time the English King did not get his head cut off but he lost thirteen American colonies. They signed the declaration of Independence in 1776 and under their first President, George Washington, began to manage their own affairs. They have gone on doing this ever since with increasing success. The 13 colonies are now the United States of America. But Canada stuck to Britain.

Now look at the other side of the world. In India a young man called Robert Clive suddenly became famous. He fought the French and beat them, so that hardly any Frenchmen stayed in India. He fought the powerful Indian princes and made them allow the British

to trade. The millions of inhabitants of India were not gradually driven from their country like the "red" Indians. They were ruled by the British for two hundred years. But now they are ruling themselves. They have split up into two great countries called India and Pakistan.

Have you still got that map of the world handy? Don't put it away yet. Look down in the right hand corner. Two hundred years ago you'd have found nothing much marked there. Travellers told tales of a great southern land, but no one was sure until the voyages of Captain Cook. When he sailed home and told his story map-makers had to get busy. No map of the world was any good now unless it had two new countries marked upon it—Australia and New Zealand.





Well now that you've read this far you'll know what generally happened as soon as a new country was discovered. Two things, first, other nations came along and tried to get a share, second, the native people, like the Indians and the "red" Indians, found themselves being ruled by white men. With Australia and New Zealand things were better. No other European nation tried to take them, and in Australia there were only a very few black people so that colonists did not have to lead armies against them. In New Zealand there were splendid native people called Maoris and they fought against the British at first. But now the Maoris and the settlers who have come from Britain live peacefully side by side and there are Maori members of the New Zealand Parliament.

Right here you may be saying "Now hold on a minute." We've had a look at North America and South America and India and Australia and New Zealand, but

what about Africa? Right. What about Africa? The queer thing about Africa is that although it never had to be "discovered" because it has always been known and history started there, in Egypt, very few people from Europe bothered to go and live there until about a hundred years ago. But once the idea caught on everyone became interested in Africa. Some people went there to trade and make money. Others went to tell the native Africans about Christianity and to stop the trade in slaves that was going on. Others just wanted to farm.

Plenty of people who are still alive can remember the map of Africa getting the way it is now, with a good deal belonging to the British Commonwealth and other bits belonging to the French and the Belgians and the Portuguese, and with two independent countries—Egypt

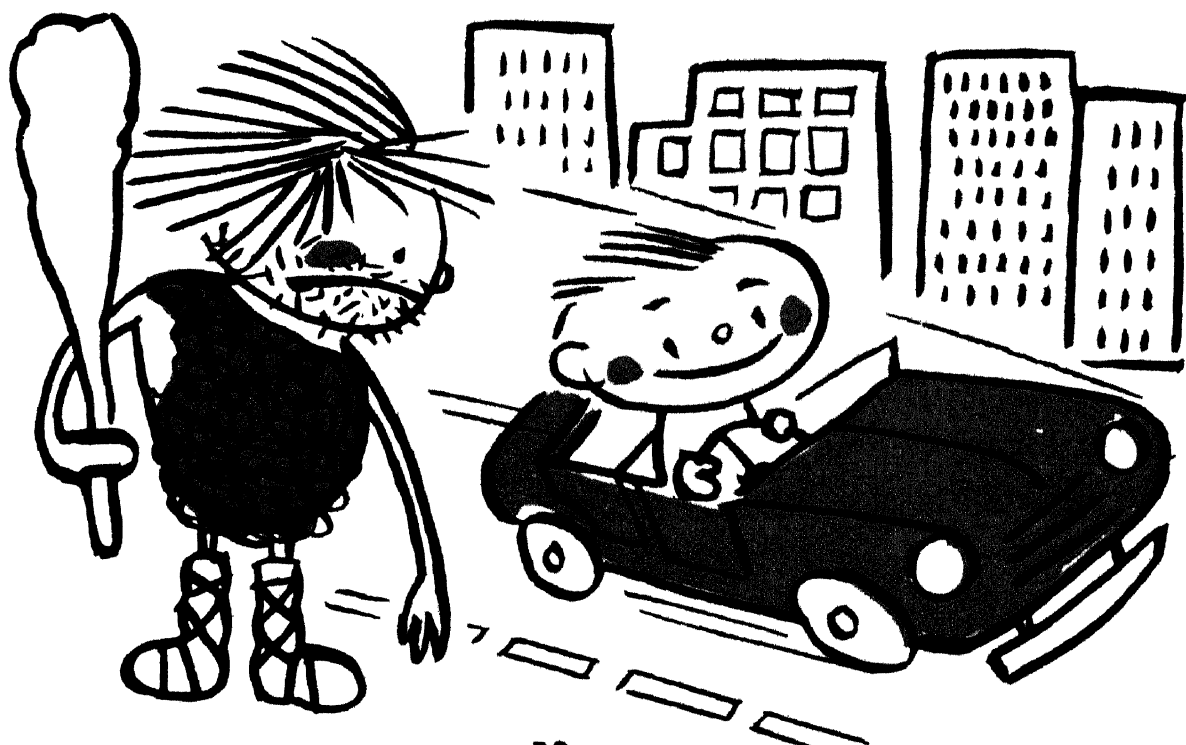


and Libya—in the north. On the whole the European nations shared out Africa by making agreements instead of fighting one another, but in South Africa where there were Dutch as well as British settlers there were bitter wars before the Union of South Africa was formed, where Dutch and British now live side by side.

And the native races of Africa? Everyone is waiting now to see what will happen to them. They are certainly not dying out as the Red Indians did, but they have not yet been allowed to govern themselves like India and Pakistan. What will happen to them? That is part of the history which perhaps you will see being written.

HISTORY IN YOUR HEAD

Did you ever think how much history there is in your head without your doing any reading at all? Perhaps



you saw the coronation procession in London. That's part of history that you'll be able to tell your children. Or maybe you remember the day television reached your district. That'll be history too. The older you get, the more history there is in your head. You just can't help it.

Well then, imagine you can get hold of someone who's a hundred and not too tired to talk to you and you can ask him to tell you some of the things he remembers. "Oh dear," he might say, "I remember a lot of things. What d'you want to hear about specially"? "Well," you say, "what about democracy and science? I suppose there's lots more democracy and lots more science since you were a boy?"

You can bet the old fellow starts scratching his chin at that. "Lots more science," he says. "Sure. I remember railways being built all over the world and now I've lived to see some of them starting to close down. I remember the first bicycles and the first motor cars and the first aeroplanes. I've lived through from the time when airships were the latest thing to the time when you couldn't see one outside a museum. And wireless. I was mighty proud of my first crystal set and then I was mighty proud of my first battery set and now I'm quite content with my all mains set, but you young people say I'm a back-number because I don't have T.V. I've seen science do wonderful things in medicine too. But I've seen it do terrible things in two World Wars."

"And what about democracy?" you ask, remembering that democracy was the second of the two ideas handed down by the Greeks which have made western

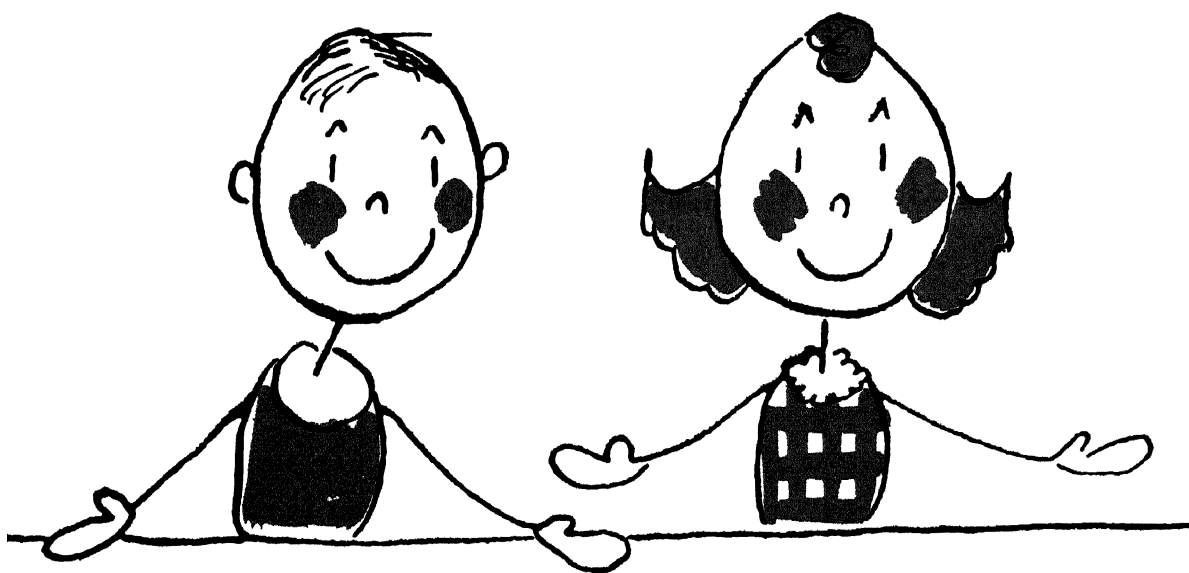


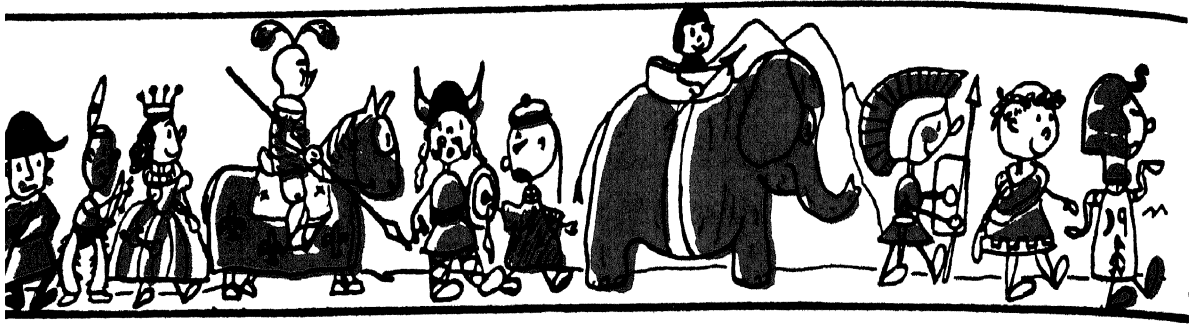
people strong. (Science of course was the first). "Well now, let's see," says old hundred-years-old, "I guess it's against democracy to have slaves, isn't it? Well, when I was just a kid they had a terrible Civil War in America. The southern states used a lot of slaves on their plantations, but the northern states wanted the slaves set free. So the South said 'all right, we'll have a government of our own. We'll not be part of the United States any longer.' But Abraham Lincoln, who was President at that time, would not let the country be divided. The North won, the slaves were freed and the United States stayed united."

At about the same time that the U.S.A. was freeing slaves Russia was freeing serfs, which weren't much different from slaves. But there was plenty happening in Britain too. Working people were being given the right to vote for Parliament, Trade Unions and Co-operative Societies were growing. In 1870 for the first time free education was provided for every child in the country.

In the Commonwealth more and more countries have become independent, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa have been joined by Eire, which used to be called Ireland, India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon. But though these countries are on their own now and can't be bossed around from London they are still all members of the Commonwealth and proud to acknowledge their loyalty to the Queen.

But there's no doubt that, in spite of all the progress he has seen, what any hundred-year-old would remember before anything else would be the two terrible wars and the many smaller wars and revolutions which the world has seen during his lifetime. So let us take a quick look around the world of to-day and see what has happened to us and the people of other lands in hopes that we can find a way of living together in peace.





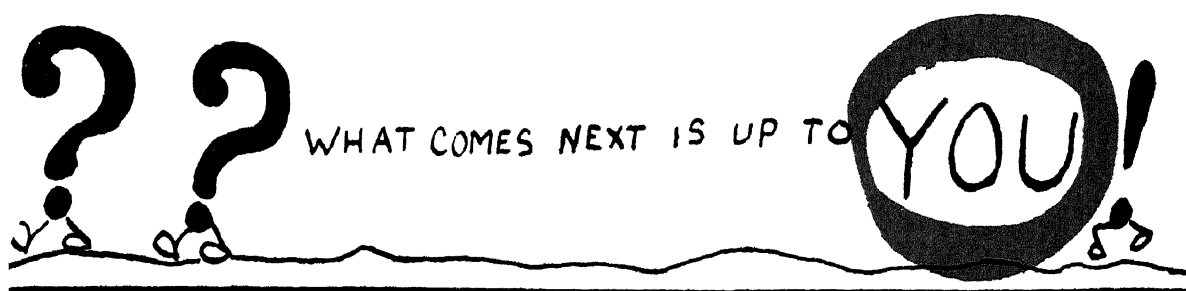
After years of building colonial empires, the great nations of Europe have had to give more and more of the ruling of those lands to the people who live in them.

All of South and Central America is now divided into republics who run their own governments.

Lands and people of the Far East now have their own leaders, and though strong men like Charlemagne, Genghis Khan, and Napoleon and Hitler have tried at times to rule the whole world, not since the days of the Roman Empire has there been a real boss of the world. But two countries have grown especially powerful and strong, the United States and the nation of Russia, leader of the Soviet Republics that stretch from Europe to the Pacific Ocean.

Sometimes as we hear the news of our everchanging world we grow discouraged in our hope that we will all ever settle down and live together in peace.

BUT



After two great wars in which nearly all the countries in the world were fighting, a great new try has been made to end all wars and help the people of all lands. This great hope of all thinking, decent people is called the

UNITED NATIONS.

It is like a great congress or parliament where laws and agreements can be made for all the world. All nations can help to decide there how we shall live together—fairly and peacefully with respect for each other.

It gives us a chance to learn to know and understand each other—to work together for the good of all of us. So it is up to the men, women, boys and girls of every land to work for the success of

The United Nations.

If we each will do our part in every way we can, then
the

HISTORY

of the

Years to Come

CAN BE FUN

Other *CAN BE FUN* books by Munro Leaf

Arithmetic Can be Fun

Safety Can be Fun

Grammar Can be Fun

Manners Can be Fun

Reading Can be Fun

Science Can be Fun

Geography Can be Fun
